DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 477 771 IR 058 725

AUTHOR	Johnson, Debra Wilcox
TITLE	Illinois State Library Evaluation of Library Services and Technology Act Funds, FY 1998-FY 2002.
INSTITUTION	Illinois State Library, Springfield.
PUB DATE	2002-00-00
NOTE	108p.; Page numbers do not match table of contents.
AVAILABLE FROM	For full text: http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/library/isl/LSTAEvaluation.doc/.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative (142)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Access to Information; Federal Aid; *Grants; Information Technology; *Library Funding; *Library Planning; *Library Services; State Libraries; Statewide Planning
IDENTIFIERS	Illinois; *Library Services and Technology Act 1996

ABSTRACT

This report evaluates whether the Illinois State Library LSTA (Library Services and Technology Act) grant offerings reflect the priorities established in the 5-year plan and help to meet the needs of local libraries. The first section provides a picture of LSTA in Illinois, including LSTA offerings in several categories, the distribution of grants to various types of libraries, and grant awards under each of the goals for the 5-year period of LSTA. The second section reviews the major grants funded in the areas of technology, young adult, and collection. The third section discusses the impact of youth services and training grants. The fourth section outlines the Educate and Automate grant program to illustrate why the Illinois State Library may have used a smaller percentage of LSTA funds for technology than other states. The fifth section describes "Lighting the Fire," a new program to enhance the creativity of grants developed from the field and to explore new ways to improve the grant-making process in Illinois. Several recommendations are offered. (MES)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 477 771

ILLINOIS STATE LIBRARY

EVALUATION OF LIBRARY SERVICES AND TECHNOLGOY ACT FUNDS FY 1998-FY2002

Prepared by Debra Wilcox Johnson
Jean Wilkins Director
Jesse White Secretary of State and State Librarian

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J. Wilkins

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

IR058725

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive summary i

Introduction 1

A picture of LSTA in Illinois 3

- Illinois LSTA offerings 3
- Distribution of grants 9

Review of technology, young adult, and collection grants 15

- Technology grants 15
- Young adult grants 22
- Collection grants 29

Impact of youth services and training grants 32

- Services for youth grants 32
- Training grants 50

Educate and Automate grants 85

Lighting the Fire 92

Conclusion 103

- Recommendations 106

EVALUATION OF ILLINOIS LSTA
FY 1998 - FY 2002

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The focus for the evaluation of Illinois LSTA is the state's LSTA long-range plan. The guiding question is: Did the Illinois State Library grant offerings reflect the priorities established in the five-year plan and help meet the needs of local libraries? The current long-range plan has five goals:

- To ensure access to information by the citizens of Illinois by enabling all Illinois libraries to share resources in regional and statewide databases.
- To ensure that Illinois libraries have access to all sources and formats of information.
- To enrich the quality of life for the citizens of Illinois by advocating the pleasures of reading, the ability to read, and the importance of reading.
- To develop training methods and activities that will allow library personnel and Illinois citizens to become technologically literate and to have full access to information available through libraries.
- To continue expanding the role of networks, consortia, and partnerships in library development.

The evaluation of Illinois LSTA included five components: an overview of grant offerings; a review of technology, young adult, and collection grants; an examination of impact from youth and training grants; a comparison of LSTA to Educate and Automate; and an analysis of the *Lighting the Fire* initiative. Data sources for the evaluation included interviews with state library staff, review of existing documentation on the LSTA grants, the Illinois LSTA database, and focus group interviews with staff from each type of library.

Illinois LSTA offerings

The offerings made under LSTA during the five-year period reflect the diverse needs of the libraries in Illinois. Over the five-year period, opportunity existed for field-initiated projects as well as grants targeted to specific client groups and library needs. Major grants offerings were complemented with mini-grants. Targeted clienteles during the five-year period included children, preteens, and teens. Topical grant offerings included *bring in an expert*, high cost equipment or

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

reference materials, collections for youth, nonfiction collections, and marketing. The grant categories by fiscal year are:

FY 1998: general grant category for new services and programs.
FY 1999: general grants for new services and programs and bring in an expert.
FY 2000: general grants for new services, bring in an expert, reading initiatives for preteens and teenagers, Project Next Generation, equipment to books, book start, and marketing.
FY 2001: model or innovative programs, libraries in the 21st Century, reaching out to special populations, libraries as community leaders, and collection connection.

FY 2002: Do you have a dream . . . ? and grow with a pro.

Distribution of grants

Clearly, one of the most notable features of the LSTA process in Illinois is the remarkable number of grants given out over the five-year period. Based on the federal LSTA annual reports, 3,230 grants were given out during the first four years of LSTA. To date, an additional 292 grants have been given out for FY 2002. The four-year total amount awarded is $16,613,620, with an additional $3,306,684 distributed during the first part of FY 2002.

The distribution of grants also reflects the multitype nature of the library community in Illinois. All four types of libraries and regional library systems are represented each year in the grant awards. During the first four years of LSTA, the most grants were given out to school libraries (which represent the greatest number of library outlets in the state), although the largest amount of money was distributed to public libraries.

Grants were awarded in all five goal areas of the Illinois LSTA long-range plan. All types of libraries received funds under each of the five goals. The largest number of grants were given in goal two (access to information sources in all formats). The greatest amount was awarded under goal four (training for staff and public).

Review of technology, young adult, and collection grants

LSTA has clearly been used to support *technology* in Illinois libraries, but perhaps not to the extent as other states. This is due in large part to an alternative funding source for library

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

technology in Illinois – the state-funded Educate and Automate program. The major LSTA technology grants were awarded for resource sharing, extending service to library outlets, adaptive technology, community information networks, reference tools and databases, targeting specific client groups, and special technology applications.

One LSTA mini-grant program featured technology: equipment to books. The funds were intended to supplement local funds for expensive equipment. Under this program, 263 grants were funded for equipment for all types of libraries. In addition, a portion of the *bring in an expert/grow with a pro* grants featured training in technology or development of library web sites. Technology also was often embedded within a new or enhanced service in other LSTA grants.

The element that ties together the varied *young adult* LSTA grants is innovative programming to attract teens and preteens to the library and to encourage reading. Opportunities for self-expression and creativity are the hallmarks of these grant projects. Further, the projects enhance involvement of young adults in the planning and implementation of the library activities.

Partnerships were prevalent in this category, especially between public and school libraries, but also incorporating a number of community agencies and organizations.

Major grants for services for young adults featured reading incentive projects, extending school library hours, writing activities, creative programming for and by teens, specialized information services, book discussions, and homework assistance. Three unique grants were: book groups for teen mothers, cooperative library and classroom drama projects, and a publishing project that brought together visually-impaired teens and their sighted peers. Project Next Generation grants used a model of service that combined mentoring and technology in public libraries to reach at-risk junior high students. After FY 2000, the state began funding these projects as a Jesse White, Secretary of State, sponsored initiative.

Illinois has used targeted, small grants to support *collection development* across all types of libraries. These mini-grants included collection grants for schools, equipment to books, book start, and collection connection. Some major collection grants were submitted in the open grant category

during the five-year period; the majority of these were in FY 1998, as collections became a focus of mini-grant programs in other fiscal years. As with technology, funds for library materials also were nested in service grants for specific clienteles. The major collection grants reveal an interest in expanding multicultural and foreign language resources, development of specialized collections, and creation of rotating collections for use by small public libraries.

Impact of youth services and training grants

Youth services

Provision of services and collections for youth is present throughout the five-year LSTA cycle. Libraries offered a range of programming options for children, linked technology to youth services, and reached out to diverse clienteles. Partnerships between public and school libraries were prevalent, and linking with a variety of community groups was a natural occurrence in most of the projects. Diverse partnerships, such as those with a museum, police departments, and a Head Start program, lead to effective sharing of resources and expertise.

A sampling of major LSTA grants for young people illustrate the impact of LSTA for youth. A key outcome identified in the analysis was improved information literacy among the children. Use of technology as well as a full range of library resources helped children see the importance of the library for learning. Public library projects also emphasized homework assistance, which allowed for one-on-one assistance with school work.

As children were engaged in the library in meaningful ways, parents, teachers, and the students themselves reported an excitement about reading, increased knowledge of information sources, and improved performance in school. Most endearing are the impact stories that describe how a library's efforts influenced a child's interest and attitude toward the library and reading and affected his or her self-esteem.

The school library, with additional service hours, also extended library service for families who had limited or no access to public library services. Alternatively, public libraries hosted numerous class visits, welcoming thousands of students to explore the value of both school and public libraries for school work and for leisure.

Use of libraries increased as a result of the youth services projects. Some grants reached underserved groups, such as minority students or English as a second language households. Most projects reported increased use of collections and new library card holders from grant activities.

Increased reading and diversity of reading choices were identified as important outcomes of new or enhanced services for young people.

Training for library staff

The magnitude of the effect of LSTA funding for training in the Illinois library community is difficult to summarize. Just using figures from a sampling of grants shows that a massive number of hours of learning opportunities were offered and that thousands of library employees have participated. Teleconferences, such as those on adaptive technology and change, reached national audiences, while multiple delivery methods within the state made training accessible to even the remotest libraries.

The overriding theme that emerges from analysis of the major training grants is diversity of delivery mechanisms and training designs. Training opportunities ranged from one-hour sessions to week-long training institutes. Conferences, intensive institutes, online tutorials, videoconferencing, mentoring, hands-on workshops, and college-credit classes are a sampling of the varied approaches used to educate library staff and trustees in Illinois.

All levels of staff have had learning opportunities, and training has affected library staff in all types of libraries. Extending training to a statewide and even national audience is possible because of an effective videoconferencing system within the state (VTEL) and resident expertise in satellite teleconferencing. State and system sponsored training events illustrated the advantages of collaborative planning for training and provided learning opportunities that were not easily provided by a single institution.

The impact of LSTA in the training category is not completely a story of major grants. Three of the five years of LSTA have included funding for local learning opportunities through *bring in an expert* and *grow with a pro* mini-grants. The majority of these grants (36.0%) supported one-on-one learning in primarily three categories: technology, building planning, and long-range planning. Staff development, including group Internet and computer training, was the focus in nearly one-quarter of the grants (24.4%).

The multilevel, multi-topic, multi-strategy approach used in LSTA training grants has resulted in increased knowledge, improved skills, and broadening attitudes among library staff. Grant reports provide documentation of not only the number of people involved in training, but of progress in learning. In some cases, it is reaching a common set of competencies. In others, making better use of library resources and technology is the outcome. Self-awareness and better understanding of working relationships show personal growth that can positively influence the workplace. Learning from other library experiences - positive and negative - is another outcome of the LSTA-funded training, as are reflecting about the future of libraries and more effective long-range planning. No matter what training strategy is used, the most common outcome reported by participants is building a network of colleagues to help continue the learning and provide ongoing support for personal development.

User education

The majority of user education grants focused on technology and electronic resources. Themes that emerged were partnerships among different types of libraries, a focus on information literacy, and education of senior citizens. Typically, grants that focused on computer training for library users included a component for library staff training as well.

Training sessions in libraries of all types have been offered to community residents of all ages. Libraries conducted computer training using resources ranging from a state-of-the art computer lab to a single laptop computer. A key feature of the library-sponsored technology training was that it was accessible, offered in the library and at other convenient community locations. Individual workshops, program series, open labs, and one-on-one tutoring helped library users acquire computer skills, including how to navigate the Internet and use of library electronic resources. The number of hours of training made available and the attendance figures are impressive. Indications of the quality of the training were requests for more sessions and waiting lists from users who had heard positive things about the library training. Participants consistently gave positive ratings to this type of library instruction and, most important, reported use of newly acquired technology skills and increased self-confidence in their abilities.

Improving information literacy curricula and teaching was another theme in the training category. Information literacy projects that teamed teachers and librarians resulted in more interactive learning experiences for students and embedded the library and its resources into the learning process. Of particular importance was the increased ability of young people to evaluate electronic resources, especially those found on the Internet. The resulting classroom projects "represented new creative thinking about the roles of teachers and the library media specialist and new ways to assess student learning." Not only did the students benefit, but teachers improved their technology, planning, and information literacy skills as well. The information literacy projects reinforced the value of planning time for teachers to incorporate the library and technology into instruction. In some of these grants, a stronger link was made with the public library as an educational resource for teachers and students.

The grant projects that featured computer training for seniors identified a strong need in their communities for customized training for this clientele. All the projects specifically designed for serving senior citizens reached, and in some cases exceeded, the expected levels of participation. All the projects reported repeat attendance at workshops and tutoring by older adults, resulting in increased use of technology in the library and at home. The benefit of intergenerational technology training was documented in the projects that had high school students teaching senior citizens. Convincing testimony was given about the quality of the instruction and the relationships that resulted from this kind of learning. Libraries learned that the library can be a home for senior citizens as they learn about technology, but more important, the value of reaching out to older adults at other community locations was confirmed.

Educate and Automate grants

Illinois has offered its own grant program to support technology in libraries during the past five years. Educate and Automate, a state-funded initiative, is a key contributor to the progress being made toward meeting LSTA goals and in further development of libraries statewide. The two programs complement each other, helping to assure that the Illinois library community can offer a full range of technology-based and technology-enhanced library services.

Basic equipment, digitization projects, adaptive technology, and networking solutions are the primary categories of funding in Educate and Automate. Assistive technology was a funding area in three of the five years.

The scope of the Educate and Automate program is impressive. During the last five years, 2,794 grants have been awarded at a cost of $11,001,632. A comparison with LSTA competitive grants during the same period showed that for every two dollars awarded in LSTA, more than one dollar was awarded in Educate and Automate. The greatest impact of the Educate

and Automate funds comes in the area of networking. Grants were funded in this category each of the five years, with a total of $5,085,842 awarded in 421 grants.

Libraries in Illinois make use of both LSTA and Educate and Automate grants to improve library services. For FY 1998, 6.4 percent of the Educate and Automate grants went to libraries that also received LSTA during the same fiscal year, representing 24 libraries. Nearly half (46.7%) of the FY 1999 Educate and Automate grants went to libraries that also received LSTA; this totaled 99 libraries.

In FY 2000, 58.2 percent of the Educate and Automate grants went to libraries that also received LSTA grants in FY 2000. The largest number of libraries using grants from both programs is in FY 2000 as well - a total of 160 libraries. The picture was similar in FY 2001, with 54.5 percent of the Educate and Automate grants going to libraries that also received LSTA funds, representing 140 libraries. The final year of comparison, FY 2002, shows that 25.4 percent of the Educate and Automate grants went to libraries that also received LSTA grants in the same year; this totaled 102 libraries.

Lighting the Fire

The Illinois State Library began a new LSTA grant initiative in the summer of 2000 called *Lighting the Fire*. The overall goal was to "ignite" the flame of creativity in the library community as well as take a deeper look at alternative approaches for encouraging participation in seeking grant

funding. The project also serves as an important element in the evaluation of LSTA and the development of a new LSTA five-year plan.

Lighting the Fire incorporated two training and information sharing meetings for teams from each of the regional systems. Following the first retreat, each regional system designed a training event (or multiple events) to carry the flame of creativity to its member libraries. Each system team also developed criteria and a process for awarding the *Lighting* grants. The criteria and local grant processes developed within each system provide the Illinois State Library with an array of approaches that could be used in future LSTA grant making.

In total, 316 *Lighting* grants were submitted, with 167 grants being funded (52.8%). The majority of the grants went to public libraries, with more than 20 percent being awarded to school libraries. Academic and special libraries represented the remaining percentage of grants, with special libraries receiving the smallest number of grants.

Creativity was defined as new to the individual library or service community. The diversity of the funded grants shows how broadly that creativity was defined. The largest number of grants specifically targeted adults (nearly one-third). Services for young adults and children were funded, as were program series, reading-related activities, history-centered projects, training for librarians and teachers, and marketing.

One of the goals of this initiative was to increase participation in the grant seeking process. The system-level *Lighting* activities clearly brought new grantees into the grant process. One out of four *Lighting* grants went to libraries that had not received an LSTA grant during the four-year period prior to *Lighting* (45 grants, 26.9%). For some libraries, *Lighting* also served as a catalyst for renewed grant seeking, since several of the libraries had not applied for a LSTA grant in the previous two fiscal years.

Fundamentally, the *Lighting the Fire* initiative illustrated what can happen when an idea from one person is supported and shared. The geometric progression of the *Lighting* concept

from one person to a statewide library community in a one-year period is one of the most compelling aspects of *Lighting the Fire*.

At the November 2001 *Lighting* retreat, each system team was asked to select one member to serve as an "ambassador" to continue the work of the *Lighting the Fire* initiative. The ambassadors now serve as a working committee for LSTA in Illinois, providing feedback on the LSTA funding categories, review criteria, and the grant-making process. Each system team also created a set of ideas and priorities for carrying on the *Lighting* initiative. Across systems, the primary types of activities planned were brainstorming grant ideas for new LSTA grants and other funding sources, networking among libraries for improved library services, grant writing assistance and workshops, and celebration of the successes of local libraries.

Focus groups conducted at the November retreat provided valuable input into future LSTA activity. Eight focus groups were conducted. The results of the interviews reveal an increased understanding of the challenges of awarding LSTA grants statewide. The variety of criteria and particularly the weighting of some criteria suggests areas of change in the review point system currently being used for Illinois LSTA grants. Three areas to add or strengthen in the criteria (and points) were creativity, partnerships, and encouragement of novice grant writers. Other suggestions also were made for modification of the LSTA grant process. Among these was the development a grant mentor program in concert with regional library systems. Support was given for bringing people together before, during, and after a LSTA grant cycle for developing grant ideas, building better personal networks, and sharing results and learning from funded LSTA projects.

The use of LSTA mini-grants was reinforced with the *Lighting* project. Smaller grants appealed to libraries less familiar with the grant process or libraries with more limited personnel resources. One of the most positive outcomes of the *Lighting* initiative is the level of engagement of the local and system library communities in LSTA and the grant-making process. **Observations and recommendations**

The basic question guiding this evaluation was, "Did Illinois make progress toward the goals in the LSTA long-range plan?" The answer to this question is yes. The state library solicited and awarded grants that support the goals in the plan. Throughout the years of LSTA funding, the state continued to be responsive to statewide needs, as indicated by changing program offerings and use of state funds for additional library projects. The LSTA funds have been used to enhance the quality of library services in strong libraries that can provide models for other libraries as well as improve the basic services and collections in libraries with limited financial resources.

This evaluation clearly documents the extent to which the Illinois State Library has worked to be inclusive of all types of libraries. Another characteristic of LSTA grants in Illinois is collaboration. The review of the major grants revealed partnerships as one of the strongest elements in the projects across LSTA categories.

There is active sharing of products and information from LSTA grants throughout the state and nationally. Databases and web sites are accessible via the Internet, and CD ROM and printed products are widely disseminated and available through ILLINET. The state library features selected grants on its web site as well as in *Illinois Libraries*.

It is important to acknowledge the quality of the administration of LSTA in Illinois by the state library. The number of competitive LSTA grants awarded in Illinois is larger than the total of many other states combined. The database developed for LSTA allows for multiple ways of analyzing and tracking the grants, and state library consulting staff assumes major responsibility for not only reviewing and monitoring grants, but as key informants for libraries engaged in the grant-seeking process. In total, the management of LSTA funding in Illinois is impressive and effective.

LSTA is complemented in Illinois with strong state-level funding for libraries. This is manifested in per capita funding formulas for school and public libraries, public library construction equalization grants, and ongoing support for ILLINET and other statewide electronic services and

resources. The Educate and Automate program extends the impact of LSTA by offering grants in networking, equipment, and digital imaging technology.

LSTA funding, along with its predecessor LSCA, has been a catalyst for additional state funding for libraries. Construction, adult and family literacy, public library equalization, and Project Next Generation grants trace their roots to federal funding.

The *Lighting the Fire* initiative shows the Illinois State Library's strong commitment to continuous improvement in its grant process, the quality of grant projects, and inclusiveness of eligible libraries. The results from *Lighting the Fire* are influencing future LSTA offerings, the grant process, and the development of the new LSTA long-range plan.

It is important for the Illinois State Library to continue the good work it is doing with LSTA funds in Illinois. In choosing future grant priorities, it is valuable to continue to invite field-initiated projects, especially using the current "Do you have a dream . . . " approach. Maintaining the use of mini-grants also is recommended for meeting specific needs in the state, including those of underfunded and small libraries. Building on the strength of the current LSTA efforts in Illinois, eight enhancements are recommended.

- Documentation of impact remains an area for continued improvement in reporting by grantees. Ongoing training in outcomes-based evaluation is needed for all types of libraries. The Illinois State Library also can model quality evaluation by sharing effective grant evaluations and reports.

- The Illinois LSTA database builds on the state library's systematic reporting process from grantees. To build the capacity of the database for evaluation of LSTA, a few additional reporting elements could be required to allow for better statistical analysis across projects. Additional index terms for all grants would help in grouping similar projects. A simple thesaurus of terms would streamline this process, perhaps leading to requiring the grantees to assign index terms as part of the reporting process.

- The emphasis in *Lighting the Fire* on creative grants suggests that an adjustment could be made in the evaluation point system used for reviewing LSTA grants. Recognizing and rewarding creativity along with other core elements potentially would encourage more creative grant projects. Embedding criteria directly tied to collaboration in the grant guidelines is a practice that should be continued.

- A portion of funds could be set aside for modest planning grants that would lead to the possible development of major grants in the following year. The planning grant year can be

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

spent documenting more fully the need for services, solidifying and extending partnerships, identifying sources of expertise and equipment, brainstorming on alternative service approaches, creating a more complete implementation plan, and gathering baseline data to support a stronger evaluation component in the next grant proposal.

- A sampling process to collect qualitative and quantitative evidence of impact from grants funded in previous years would help assess long-term impact from LSTA. In addition, this follow-up on major grants could provide a clearer picture of the continuation of services after grants have ended and address how well the projects have been integrated into the operations of the libraries.

- In restructuring the LSTA long-range plan, consideration needs to be given for a broader goal in the area of training. Currently, Goal Four focuses on training for staff and public in technology and information literacy. LSTA support for training of all kinds is akey impact area in the Illinois library community; the new long-range plan needs to more clearly reflect this priority.

- To encourage networking and to enhance the quality of grant projects, some consideration should be given to bringing together "like" grant projects early in a fiscal year to promote sharing of ideas and mentoring among staff working on similar projects. An alternative (or supplemental) approach would be for the library systems to bring all grantees from their regions together for brainstorming and mentoring on newly funded LSTA grants.

- There is always room for further sharing of what worked in LSTA projects and avoiding reinventing the wheel on similar grant projects across fiscal years. The Illinois State Library can facilitate additional methods for communicating learning from completed LSTA projects.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

INTRODUCTION

The focus for the evaluation of Illinois LSTA is the state's LSTA long-range plan. The guiding question is: Did the Illinois State Library grant offerings reflect the priorities established in the five-year plan and help meet the needs of local libraries? The current long-range plan has five goals:

- To ensure access to information by the citizens of Illinois by enabling all Illinois libraries to share resources in regional and statewide databases.
- To ensure that Illinois libraries have access to all sources and formats of information.
- To enrich the quality of life for the citizens of Illinois by advocating the pleasures of reading, the ability to read, and the importance of reading.
- To develop training methods and activities that will allow library personnel and Illinois citizens to become technologically literate and to have full access to information available through libraries.
- To continue expanding the role of networks, consortia, and partnerships in library development.

The operating philosophy of LSTA grant making in Illinois is to award most of its federal funds to local libraries, with 96 percent of the funds directly awarded to libraries of all types and regional library systems. Some statewide initiatives are funded through regional library systems. The focus of these is special projects more efficiently offered statewide rather than locally. Progress on the five goals was not accomplished primarily with funding major statewide initiatives, but rather by funding collective and individual library projects.

This five-year evaluation of Illinois of LSTA included five components:

1.) an overview on the nature and extent of competitive grant offerings during the five-year period;

2.) a review of grant awards in three categories: technology, services for young adults, collections;

3.) an examination of impact from grants in two categories: meeting the needs of youth and training;

4.) a study of the relationship between LSTA offerings and the Educate and Automate state grants; and

5.) an analysis of the *Lighting the Fire* grant initiative (LSTA FY 2001 and 2002).

Data sources for the evaluation included in-depth interviews with state library staff, existing documentation on the LSTA grants from the first four years of the initiative, the Illinois LSTA database, and focus group interviews with library staff from each type of library and library systems as part of the *Lighting the Fire* initiative. Because the responsibility for evaluation rests with the funded libraries, the reports from major grants were key data sources for the evaluation of LSTA.

A PICTURE OF LSTA IN ILLINOIS

Illinois LSTA offerings

The offerings made under LSTA during the five-year period reflect the diverse needs of the libraries in Illinois. The state has well-developed multitype library cooperation and multitype library systems, making all types of libraries eligible for and involved in the LSTA process. Not only do Illinois libraries vary by type, but also by level of support and sophistication. While the state is home to several libraries with national reputations, there are also poorly funded and

underdeveloped libraries within the state. Library service throughout the state represents a full spectrum of communities and library needs, requiring LSTA funds for both basic and innovative library services and collections.

Over the five-year period, opportunity existed for field-initiated projects as well as grants targeted to specific client groups and library needs. Major grants offerings were complemented with mini-grants, which allowed for targeting of specific needs and made the LSTA grants more accessible to small libraries and libraries that did not regularly seek LSTA funds. Targeted clientele during the five-year period included children, preteens, and teens. Topical grant offerings included bringing in an expert, high cost equipment or reference materials, collections for youth, nonfiction collections, and marketing.

The number of categories of offerings varied annually. Based on findings in the school and public per capita grants (state-funded grants), input from the field during the development of the long-range plan, and the desire to encourage applications, the types of offerings changed throughout the five-year period. In addition, the availability of state-funded grant programs, such as Educate and Automate and adult and family literacy grants, influenced decisions on the grant categories. Fiscal years 2000 and 2001 had the largest number of separate grant categories; the time needed to administer this many different grant programs led to a reduction of grant categories in FY 2002. Further, the development of the "dream" category in FY 2002 was seen as encompassing the diverse categories used for major grants in FY 2001.

During FY 1998, all grants were solicited in a general grant category for new services and programs. As is the case in each of the following years, the general grant category is open to all types of libraries and library consortia. No limit was given on the amount of funds that could be requested.

The FY 1999 LSTA grants were solicited in two categories: general grants for new services and programs and *bring in an expert*. The *bring in an expert* grants were designed to promote sharing of resources, establish enduring professional and institutional linkages, and to develop and enhance professional expertise in local libraries. Applicants were required to use Illinois experts to

work with staff and the community in areas such as writing policies, staff development, collection development, conversion help, technology help or training, and developing marketing strategy. Restrictions included hiring a member of the applicant agency, pay for staff to attend an activity, hiring regional library staff, buying equipment or excessive materials, and hiring an out-of-state person. Applications could be for up to $4,500. Special grants for school library collections were awarded later in FY 1999. Schools receiving state-funded per capita grants received $1,000 to improve their collections.

A greater number of grant categories were developed during FY 2000. As in FY 1999, general grants and bring in an expert grants were solicited. The general grants were offered twice, with the first set being one-year projects and the second, five-month projects. A cap of $250,000 per application was set for both of these offerings. These grants were to include innovative methods of conducting a program, developing a new service, or trying a new activity. The *bring in an expert* category carried the same instructions as in FY 1999.

Five additional initiatives were developed in FY 2000 based on feedback from the field and review a state-funded school and public library per capita grants: reading initiatives for preteens and teenagers, equipment to books, book start, and marketing.

Reading initiatives for preteens and teenagers were grants to pilot innovative projects that attract preteens and teens to the library, such as activities that encourage reading and writing, after school activities, coffee house programs, and reading/writing chat rooms. Mentoring and outreach needed to be major components to this activity, and no more than 30% of the funds could be used to purchase library materials or equipment. Only one grant up to $25,000 per agency was allowed in this category.

Project Next Generation grants allowed libraries to focus on junior high students with mentoring programs involving technology and the public library. The mentors worked with the young adults to develop projects with technology. The projects encouraged young adults to stay in school. Set amounts were designated for the grants for $9,455 or $10,955.

Equipment to books were grants designed to enhance access to information and promote resource sharing with one piece of needed equipment or to purchase reference materials in any format. Libraries were to consider an expensive piece of equipment that would benefit services to its patrons; the grant was not to pay for equipment totally, but to support the total cost. The funds could not be used for library furnishings. Reference materials were acceptable in all formats, including one-year subscriptions, with a focus on higher cost reference materials. No fiction could be purchased. Only one application per agency was allowed, and a library could not apply for both equipment and reference materials. These were $2,000 grants.

Book start grants provided print materials (birth through high school) to financially challenged schools (K-12) and public libraries. To qualify, the library had to be eligible for discount levels of 60% or more under the national E-rate program. These grants required a two to one match with local funds; the library received two dollars for every local dollar raised either through donations or a local budget increase. Subscriptions, software, and textbooks were not allowed for purchase. Only one application up to $5,000 was allowed per agency.

Marketing grants were to highlight the library as a vital resource, to promote library activities to the community, and/or to develop and enhance professional contact between community media and the library. Grants could include advertisements in all media. Funds were to be used to develop a publicity campaign tailored to the library community; it could include advertisements in all media. Restrictions included hiring staff from the library or regional library system and purchase of equipment. Libraries could apply for up to $1,000.

LSTA grant offerings in FY 2001 were distinguished by several major grant categories, rather than just one general grant category. The major grant categories included: model or innovative programs, libraries in the 21st Century, reaching out to special populations, and libraries as community leaders.

Model or innovative program grants were to be used to develop innovative methods of conducting a program, developing a new service, or trying a new activity. Giveaways and PR just about the library were ineligible expenses. Up to $250,000 per grant was available.
Libraries in the 21st Century grants were to develop creative and innovative programs and models that showcase the library as a vital component of 21st Century society. The grants needed to demonstrate new services, programs, or partnerships that distinguish the library as an innovator in the 21st Century, such as support for distance education, 24/7 access, mentoring programs for rural/small libraries, preservation/conservation, web evaluation for schools, or new twists on old services. The grants had to demonstrate cooperative partnerships. No digital-imaging grants were allowed, and giveaways and PR just about the library were ineligible expenses. Grants were available up to $100,000, with a minimum of $5,000.
Reaching out to special populations grants called for exemplary programs or models that implemented or strengthened services to a special population in a library community. Special populations included, but were not limited to, seniors, disabled, disadvantaged, veterans, minorities, and limited English speaking. The majority of funds needed to focus on program rather than collection; materials requested needed to be an integral part of the grant activities. The library had to provide demographics for the special population. If a new service was proposed, the library was required to work with an outside agency to determine need and work with a partner. If the project was to strengthen existing service,

the library described what was done in the past and how the library determined need for services. The grants were awarded for up to $30,000.
Libraries as community leaders grants developed exemplary programs or models to raise the profile of libraries in their communities through partnerships. A key outcome of these grants was to make the library a local anchor for community services, working with a minimum of two groups. Materials expenditures were limited to no more than 10 percent of

the grant award, and giveaways and PR just about the library were ineligible expenses. The grants were awarded for up to $30,000.

In addition to the four major grant categories, collection mini-grants also were offered. The collection connection grants were used to purchase nonfiction or reference books in two areas of concentration: science, health, multiculturalism, and materials in a foreign language. Fiction was allowed only in the foreign language category. The library had to connect subject areas chosen to the current holdings of the library in the same area. No journals/subscriptions, software, textbooks, or fiction (except foreign language) were allowed. The range of grants offered were from $500 to $2,500, and multiple branches of one library agency could apply.

The *Lighting the Fire* initiative, funded primarily in both FY 2001, allowed the state library and the Illinois library community an opportunity to explore increased creativity in grant ideas and to reach new grant writers. Based on this initiative (see the *Lighting* section in this report), the general category grant offering for FY 2002 reflected this renewed interest in seeking high quality creative grant applications. This offering, called "Do you have a dream for your library community?" sought grants that would provide a new service, creative activity, or unique approach to library services or replicate an exemplary program from another library. No more than 50 percent of the budget could be used for the purchase of equipment. Grants from $5,000 to $150,000 were eligible.

The change of approach with the "dream" category also was reflected in the evaluation criteria used for these grants. The major grants in the previous four years of offerings used the same evaluation point system, with 25 points for preplanning and ground work, 30 points for the project plan, 30 points for project feasibility, and 15 points for partnerships and community involvement. For the "dream" grants, the evaluation point system was 35 points for project description, 35 points for an action plan, 20 points for local need, and 10 points for keeping the dream alive. The description portion of the application specifically asks for the creative or novel elements of the proposal and how the idea is new to the library's community. Partnerships are an

important element in the action plan. Keeping the dream alive speaks to the desired outcomes and continuation of the project after the grant period ends.

The second category of grants in FY 2002 was a return to the concept of *bring in an expert* used in FY 1999 and FY 2000. *Grow with a pro* allowed libraries to contract with a professional to work with their staff or community to enhance their ability to provide and/or plan library services. Funds could not be used for physical aesthetics or entertainment, and no library could hire its own staff or staff from the regional system. Branches could apply, but a limit of five applications from a single library was set. The grant range offered was $500 to $4,900.

Distribution of grants

Clearly, one of the most notable features of the LSTA process in Illinois is the remarkable number of grants given out over the five-year period. Based on the annual reports submitted to the Institute for Museum and Library Services, 3,230 grants were given out during the first four years of LSTA. To date, an additional 292 grants have been given out for FY 2002. The number of grants awarded actually is an under-representation of the number of libraries benefitting from LSTA funding. With the state's strong emphasis on partnerships, the majority of grants worked with other libraries on the funded projects. The four-year total amount awarded is $16,613,620, with an additional $3,306,684 distributed during the first part of FY 2002.

The distribution of grants also reflects the multitype nature of the library community in Illinois. All four types of libraries and regional library systems are represented each year in the grant awards. During the first four years of LSTA, the most grants were given out to school libraries (which represent the greatest number of library outlets in the state), although the largest amount of money was distributed to public libraries. Table 1 shows the distribution of grants by type of library. As noted above, the number of libraries by type is an under-representation, as collaborative grants are common. The figure for grants to systems includes regional as well as statewide projects administered by the systems.

TABLE 1

Distribution of grants by type of library
FY 98 through FY 01

	Number of grants	Total funds awarded
Academic	160	$2,487,266
Public	1,345	$5,645,361
School	1,509	$3,531,155
Special	105	$1,606,282
System	111	$3,343,556

Grants were awarded in all five goal areas of the Illinois LSTA long-range plan. All types of libraries received funds under each of the five goals. The largest number of grants were given in goal two (access to information sources in all formats). The greatest amount of funds were awarded under goal four (training for staff and public). Listed below is a profile of grant awards under each goal for the five-year period of LSTA.

Goal One: To ensure access to information by the citizens of Illinois by enabling all Illinois libraries to share resources in regional and statewide databases.

- 27 grants have been awarded for a total of $1,453,462. Grants were awarded in all fiscal years except FY 2000 under this goal. These grant awards were significant, with the average grant size being $53,832. Emphasis on this aspect of the long-range plan has reduced over the five-year period, as more libraries provide electronic access to their holdings. The focus of this funding is to connect branches and school buildings to online catalogs and making special collections available via the Internet.
- The largest number of grants went to public libraries (10, 37.0%), followed by academic libraries (8, 29.6%) and special libraries (6, 22.2%). Two school grants (7.4%) and one system grant (3.7%) was funded under this goal.

Goal Two: To ensure that Illinois libraries have access to all sources and formats of information.

- 1,986 grants have been awarded for a total of $6,557,805. Grants were awarded in all fiscal years under this goal. The average grant award of $3,302 was the lowest in all of the five goal areas. Mini-grant programs added to the number of grants in this category, especially the collection connection, equipment to books, book start, and $1,000 school collection grants. The need for collection improvement and updating is an ongoing issue for libraries in Illinois.
- The largest number of grants went to school libraries (1,269, 63.9%), followed by public libraries (572, 28.8%). A much smaller number of grants were awarded to academic (77, 3.9%) and special libraries (48, 2.4%). Twenty grants were awarded to systems (1.0%).

Goal Three: To enrich the quality of life for the citizens of Illinois by advocating the pleasures of reading, the ability to read, and the importance of reading.

- 344 grants have been awarded for a total of $3,281,006. Grants were awarded in all fiscal years under this goal. The average grant was $9,538. The grants in this area tend to focus on children, young adults, and special needs populations since a state-funded adult and family literacy program also is available to libraries. These projects tend to encompass aspects of other goals, such as collection development and use of technology.
- The largest number of grants went to public libraries, with 237 grants awarded (68.9%), followed by school libraries (79, 23.0%). Eleven systems (3.2%), ten special libraries (2.9%), and seven academic libraries (2.0%) also received grants under this goal.

Goal Four: To develop training methods and activities that will allow library personnel and Illinois citizens to become technologically literate and to have full access to information available through libraries.

- 1,186 grants have been awarded for a total of $7,141,527. Grants were awarded in all fiscal years under this goal. The average grant was $6,496, reflecting the number of mini-grants awarded under this goal. The training grants in this category provided a full spectrum of learning opportunities and delivery strategies for library staff. The *bring in an expert* and *grow with the pro* categories contributed to the number of grants and total amount spent under this goal. Major grants focusing on technology training for library users (current and potential) also characterize the projects under this goal.
- The largest number of grants were awarded to public libraries (732, 65.9%), followed by school libraries (188, 16.9%). Of all the goals, academic libraries had the highest number of grants in this goal (94, 8.5%). System libraries had 54 grants (4.9%), and special libraries were awarded 43 grants (3.9%).

Goal Five: To continue expanding the role of networks, consortia, and partnerships in library development.

- 66 grants have been awarded for a total of $2,819,767. Grants were awarded in all fiscal years under this goal. The average grant is $42,724, which is likely affected by the presence of more than one library in these grants. Partnerships and community involvement have been key criteria for major grants, but this was often embedded in grants that fit the other four goals. Efforts to continue to extend public library service to those residents currently not served by an existing public library or public library district are funded under this goal.

- Library systems had the most grants awarded in this category (39, 59.1%). This reflects the inherent nature of systems (collaboration) as well as statewide projects administered through systems. Second in number of grants were special libraries (15, 22.7%), followed by public libraries (8, 12.1%), academic (3, 4.5%), and school (1, 1.5%).

REVIEW OF TECHNOLOGY, YOUNG ADULT, AND COLLECTION GRANTS

A content review of grants was conducted in three groups: technology, service for young adults, and collections. The focus of this review was the major grants funded in each of these areas.

Technology grants

A clear shift in focus at the federal level occurred when LSCA became LSTA, with an emphasis on technology rather than construction. LSTA has clearly been used to support technology in Illinois libraries, but perhaps not to the extent as other states. This is due in large part to an alternative funding source for library technology in Illinois - the state-funded Educate

and Automate program. The availability of these funds for equipment and networking along with other state funds supporting statewide electronic services allows the state's LSTA technology grants to focus on special technological applications rather than basic equipment, networking, access to databases, or maintenance of a statewide database of library holdings.

One mini-grant program featured technology: equipment to books. The funds were intended to supplement local funds for expensive equipment. Under this program, 263 grants were funded for equipment for all types of libraries. A portion of the *bring in an expert/grow with a pro* grants featured training in technology or development of library web sites. Major grants also were awarded for technology training. These are described in the impact section of this report.

Another characteristic of technology in the Illinois LSTA grants is that technology is often embedded within a new or enhanced service. This extends the use of LSTA funds for technology beyond the major grants where technology is the central feature. This section reviews the major special application technology grants funded during the five-year period. Technology training is covered in more detail in the impact section of this report.

Resource sharing

Technology grants clearly fit within Goal One of the long-range plan (sharing resources in regional and statewide databases). One collaborative project was to work with the 11 member organizations of the Association of Chicago Theological Schools (ACTS) to create the ACTS online catalog of the holdings in all member institutions. Special collections also were being made accessible online and through the Internet, such as the conversion of 5,400 records of the Newberry Library resources on regional history and the American West. The University Park Public Library created a specialized online catalog for its African-American materials, and Southern Illinois University added its Slavic-American imprint collection to the OCLC database and provides ongoing, quality cataloging of nonprint materials without bibliographic records in OCLC. The history of medicine collection is now more accessible due to adding the bibliographic records of more than 35,000 monographs at the University of Illinois at Chicago to OCLC.

One grant opened the resources of the Geographic Information System (GIS) lab and resource center at the Illinois Institute of Technology, offering Illinois residents free access to GIS and related training. The library at Fermilab provided web-based access to the intellectual capital developed at this physics research lab, providing public access to its collection of scientific and technical reports. The Illinois OCLC User Group developed a plan for conversion of ILLINET to a web access database, and two system "Mark of Quality" grants were used to clean up existing bibliographic databases. A partnership with other libraries anchored by the Illinois State Geological Survey Library provides 24/7 access to its bibliographic databases via the web. This opens up access to information on Illinois natural resources that previously was only available in-house.

On behalf of the Illinois academic law libraries and the Illinois Supreme Court, Northwestern University acquired the hardware and software needed to implement the Ariel and Prospero document delivery system. Ariel uses Internet for document delivery of scanned documents, and Prospero can deliver the electronic documents to the desktop of the requesting patron. Eastern Illinois University coordinated for all state university libraries a digital imaging project for distributing microformed documents electronically, providing improved access to 23.5 million microforms.

Some basic grants to complete conversion of holdings also were funded to public and school libraries. Routt High School was given funds to create its first online catalog, and Suburban Library System completed the conversion of its union list of periodicals into SILO (the statewide union list). Parkhurst Public Library converted all its records to create an online catalog.

Extending service

Technology grants helped to expand electronic services to library branches and school buildings. Linkages between school and public libraries were common, such as the projects in the Naperville and Flossmoor areas. Stinson Memorial Public Library was able to link three branches to the library's online resources, and the Centralia public library was able to automate three rural branches. Springfield added CD ROM towers in the school libraries, and Sterling school district

added its elementary schools to share the OPAC with the high school and public library. Steeleville Public Library District offered Internet accessibility for its remote users with no long-distance charges. Laptops were used to bring homebound library users access to the library and Internet during home visits by the Marion Carnegie Library. Improved access to several area libraries was the goal of the Gateway Guide via the Internet developed by Illinois State University.

Another example of extending service through technology was linking the bookmobile to the library's electronic resources. Quincy Public Library equipped its bookmobile with cellular modems to provide access to the Internet and the library, and classes for the public were then offered via the bookmobile. East St. Louis Public Library created a cybermobile equipped with educational products and Internet access to reach remote parts of its service area.

Adaptive technology

Adaptive or assistive technology is a critical development area for libraries in Illinois. Libraries have been funded to develop adaptive technology labs and purchase needed equipment. Three libraries received funding in this area during FY 1998. Illinois State University developed one of the first assistive technology centers, which provided better access for its users and a model for other libraries to use. South Suburban College and Urbana Free Public Library also purchased equipment. LSTA funds were not used for adaptive technology after FY 1998, since the state-funded Educate and Automate grants were targeted for this use FY 1999 - FY 2001.

Community information networks

Development of community information networks featured strong partnerships among libraries and community agencies and organizations. In Hinsdale, the public library facilitated a community web site for agencies serving youth, young adults, parents and caregivers. YES (Youth Enrichment Services) also includes a calendar of related events. Lincoln Trail Libraries System built NPIN/Illinois patterned on the National Parent Information Network; it features state-specific Internet resource links to parenting information and resources. Alliance Library System developed Hometown Countryside Connection, a community network on the Internet that expands Internet access in rural libraries and allows them to create community information web sites. The

community web site developed by the Mt. Morris Public Library provides the only Internet presence for many community organizations and links to other community web sites. The Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center worked with all types of libraries in a seven-county area to create a web-based directory of information about health, financial, legal, educational, and social services for women and children.

Reference tools and databases

Creation of specialized reference tools and databases was an important category in the major technology grants. Chicago Horticultural Society created a CD ROM product called "Virtual Green Thumb" which contains information on specific plants and gardening techniques for the home garden and developed a database for its web site on the 500 best plants for Illinois. Two public libraries created a databases of local experts to assist small businesses in the area. River Bend Library System created four databases of resources for libraries: community resources, quick reference, song index, and a Quad Cities union list of periodicals. Improved access to local, state, and national decision makers was the goal of a North Chicago Public Library project that created links to email addresses to legislators. The Chicago Historical Society built a House History Research database about Chicago residences that is available via the CHS web site. Improved access to grant and fundraising information will result from a grant to the Donors Forum of Chicago. The Forum will construct a "philanthropy portal" for public access to specialized resources, Forum expertise, and online training on funding research via the Internet. The World Trade Center - Chicago created a new web page and developed company databases to facilitate international trade and commerce in Illinois.

Some of the specialized tools were specifically targeted for use by librarians. Shawnee Library System focused its efforts on developing an Administrative Ready Reference CD ROM of needed legal and regulation materials for public libraries. The Alliance Library System created and maintains a database called Parade of Programs: Resources for Library Programming. This is a statewide database of performers, speakers, authors, and other groups available for library programming; it is accessible on Internet. North Suburban Library System is creating an online

resource for youth services personnel working in Illinois libraries that will contain forms, samples, formula, documents, and annotated bibliographies.

Digitization technology allowed libraries to create CD ROM products and/or Internet access to collections. These projects were more numerous as the five-year LSTA cycle progressed. Northern Illinois University drew from archives throughout Illinois to digitize documents about Abraham Lincoln's Illinois years and provide access via the Internet. The Illinois State Historical Society, in cooperation with three colleges, also is improving access to Lincoln materials. The society is creating color digital images of approximately 3.000 manuscripts and broadsides related to the life of Abraham Lincoln. The University of Chicago partnered with Chicago schools to develop a digital library of educational materials for K - 12 using scanning equipment to provide access to unique materials. The University of Illinois at Chicago and the Museum of Broadcast Communications created a CD ROM for high school students on the 1960 presidential debates and television's influence on U.S. culture.

Freeport Public Library is creating a web site for access to digitized historical photographs and slides from its collection. The Northern Illinois University is building on its digitization expertise to design a multimedia database of historical materials pertaining to Native American society and culture in Illinois prior to 1832. The Illinois State Archives is digitizing nearly 3,500 Illinois township plats produced from 1807 to 1855. These will be available on CD ROM and via the archive's web site. The Illinois Digitization Institute at the University of Illinois developed standards for digitization projects with a FY 2000 - 2001 project. Additional digitization projects have been funded through the state-funded Educate and Automate grant program.

Targeting specific client groups

Some technology grants were targeted to linking specific client groups to the library with technology. The Arlington Heights library project, "Cyber Seniors," provided Internet access in the local senior center. This connected the seniors directly to the library's catalog and electronic resources, and special classes were held for seniors at the center. The Illinois School for the Visually Impaired used technology to create digital information in a usable format for its students.

Limestone Township Library is developing a multimedia book club for youth, creating interactive books (Ibooks) and sharing books through programs and library multimedia computers.

Genealogists and family historians were the focus for some libraries. Lanark Public Library, in cooperation with the local high school, purchased state-of-the-art technology for genealogical and local history research. Family research CDs and the development of a web-based database of birth, marriages, and death records from the local newspapers since 1885 were the prominent features of the Wheaton Public Library project.

Other technology applications

Clearly, Illinois libraries, through the use of LSTA funds for technology, extended services, developed new products and services, and expanded access for Illinois residents to information resources and services. In addition to the main categories of grants described above, still other projects show the wide range of technology applications funded in Illinois. These diverse approaches include the following.

- Lincoln Land Community College developed a virtual reference desk for all its service centers, with email, video, and audio contact with a reference librarian.
- The public library in Bensenville created a videotape on parenting and the Internet. "Parent Power: What Every Parent MUST Know About the World Wide Web" focused on issues about use of the Internet and was designed to bridge the gap between technology savvy children and their technology mystified parents.
- Technology was used to better serve distance learners at Lewis and Clark Community College, with web-mediated reference service and videotaped user education curricula.
- The elementary schools in Bensenville acquired multimedia computers and software to create a multi-language web site.
- Southeastern Illinois College is making course reserves accessible online via the library's web site for registered students.
- Inventory control utilizing "magic library wand" radio frequency identification technology is being tested at the Ela Area Public Library District.
- Chicago Library System expanded its E-commerce functionality, developing a library vendor electronic shopping mall and brokering E-commerce services for libraries.
- Improved health care is the goal of an OSF Saint Francis Medical Center Library and University of Illinois at Chicago project that is exploring the use of handheld computing technology to provide knowledge-based resources at the point of care or patient bedside.

Young adult grants

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A continuing need in school and public libraries is to enhance use of library services and collections by young adults, which encompasses preteens and teenagers. During FY 2000, two LSTA programs targeted this client group: reading initiatives for preteens and teenagers and Project Next Generation. The dream category in 2002 generated five projects targeted to young adults. School and public libraries have received funding for these types of services.

The element that ties together the varied young adult grants is innovative programming to attract teens and preteens to the library and to encourage reading. Opportunities for self-expression and creativity are the hallmarks of these grant projects. Further, the projects enhance involvement of young adults in the planning and implementation of the library activities. Partnerships were prevalent in this category, first between public and school libraries, but also incorporating a number of community agencies and organizations.

Reading incentives to promote reading was a feature of many of the school library projects. Aurora West High School used the Scholastic Reading Count motivation program with its management software and added materials to support the program. At the Clay City school district, reading incentives included field trips, peer tutoring, programs, and teen involvement in planning. Waukegan schools worked with several partners to sponsor a reading contest, Teen Read week, read-ins at the junior and high schools, and author programs. The high school in Mt. Vernon Township focused its project on minority and at-risk students with coffeehouse type programming. DuPage Library System facilitated a joint school and public project - Team READ - that had a strong marketing component. Reading incentives, book talks, audio books, and community leaders as reading partners were used to promote reading.

For two school districts, a key component to reaching young adults was to extend school library hours beyond the normal school day. The River Bend school libraries serving grades six to twelve added after school and evening hours so students could complete class assignments, share reading materials with peers, expand computer skills, and participate in author programs. With a shift to block scheduling, the students at Morris Community High School had no study halls or

unscheduled time for library use. Extending the school library's hours and loaning out laptops for home use increased options for teen use of library resources.

Public libraries featured writing in their young adult programming. Park Forest Public Library's WRITE program (Write, Read In To Excellence) worked with middle school teachers to develop writing and reading activities and provide adult mentors for the teens. At LaGrange Park library, young adults produced a digital and print oral history of the LaGrange area during World War II. The teens read fiction and nonfiction accounts of WWII and then interviewed area senior citizens on wartime experiences.

Creative writing and music were key components of the Lifelong Learning Pleasures program at Lanark Public Library, and the Warren-Newport Public Library District offered poetry writing workshops, published original works on the library's web site, and hosted a monthly teen poetry café. Reading and writing initiatives for grades five through eight in Dixon used a variety of programming such as author visits and writing workshops to promote young authors and encourage reading.

Most of the public library grants offered a range of programs and activities for young adults. Barclay Public Library District worked with three school districts on Project TEEN, which focused on awareness of the library as a source of information and entertainment. The essential characteristic of most of the programming grants was a coordinated series of activities and programs for young adults, such as those scheduled in Lake Villa, Carthage, and Chicago Ridge.

A teen poetry café was the centerpiece of the Prairie Trails Public Library District grant, which was offered in cooperation with three high schools. In Niles, an after school program held twice monthly in the library's meeting room helped to create a place for teens to "hang out." Johnsburg Public Library District also centered the YA activities in a new, physically pleasing area within the library just for teens.

A year-long calendar of activities for young adults helped the Bensenville library mentor teens and featured the Internet University and cyber coffee houses. This library also focused on middle school and specially-challenged students from the NE DuPage Special Recreational

Association. Quincy Public Library provided a full range of reading and writing activities, supplemented with making puppets and public performances and storytelling for teens. Monthly fine arts programs were presented at the Tremont District Library, with a 50s and 60s theme for the junior high age and urban legends for the high school age.

Dongola Public Library District centered their efforts on career information. Partnering with schools and other community groups, the library introduced young adults to traditional and nontraditional careers. Forty community groups teamed with Provena Mercy Center to create the Teen CARE Network, which included community-wide access to the Provena Health Reference Center. Health-related programs were offered for young adults and parents, and a multimedia health and wellness web site pulled together current health resources and community services for teens and their families.

Programs such as poetry cafes and coffee houses showcased the talent of young adults. The Peoria Public Library created a separate young adult space in the library and featured programs that were presented by teens, supplementing these with online book discussions and linkages with community agencies. The technology skills of teens also were used in the Surfing Buddies program in the Roselle area. Teens were matched with children in the second, third, and fourth grades to work on the Internet during the summer reading program. Limestone Township Library created a young adult puppet troupe that provided programs at the library and in the community.

Book discussions, in person and online, and booktalks were a component of several of the young adult grants. Urbana Free Public Library worked with schools and teen agencies to promote reading with booktalks, teen book reviews, and reading and library use incentives. Preteens were targeted in the grant from Mascoutah Public Library with programs featuring regional celebrities followed with book discussions and online chats with speakers.

Homework assistance and support brought public libraries and schools together. Oak Park Public Library had free drop-in tutoring for youth 12 to 18 years old, offered in partnership with the schools and local youth services. A test-taking and study skills center was created at a Chicago high school and continued with school district funds. Strong partnerships facilitated the

development of a homework center for middle school students at DesPlaines Public Library. To promote the center, more than 1,300 students and teachers with diverse backgrounds made class visits to the public library.

The North Suburban Library System coordinated a project that focused on teen mothers. Five public libraries were involved in Reading: Pathway to Empowerment. Working with social service agencies, the libraries provided weekly book group circles for teen mothers that were a combination of literature discussion and poetry writing. The materials were from a national initiative called Literature for All of Us that specifically targets low-income teen mothers. The groups met first at a social service agency, where the teens could get to know the library staff. As relationships and trust grew, the groups moved to the library facilities.

Drama and writing took center stage at Tuscola School District. Teens used library resources to learn about all aspects of drama and script writing. Based on literature, plays were performed for the elementary schools, families, and the community. The librarian reported that "we met with [the class], and I don't recall ever seeing a class with their attention totally focused on the task at hand." The project was a catalyst for planning numerous other library and classroom learning projects. The eighth grade language arts teachers planned on having students adapt reading program books into one-act plays. The learning disabilities teacher planned a holiday play with eighth grade students, and one sixth grade teacher started using "all the great new biographies that our libraries now have . . . thanks to our LSTA grant." One sixth grade teacher planned drama activities linked to the students reading and appreciation of multicultural literature, including ways to celebrate the lives of famous Black Americans for Black History Month and notable women for Women's History Month.

A unique project brought together visually impaired teens with their sighted peers for writing workshops and a group-authored book. The Illinois School for the Visually Impaired project SOARS (Students Obtaining Authoring/Reading Skills) teamed with the Jacksonville school district and 25 other partner organizations. The students published a book that featured alien characters with different disabilities. Comments by participants and planners illustrate the value of this

creative project. One sophomore concluded, "It's a good thing we're doing. When I was younger and in public school, a lot of kids were mean to me. They didn't understand why I was different." Teachers reported improved socialization skills, since "there was a great deal of interaction and communication as they worked on their book for publication." "Students from area schools enjoyed reading peer-generated stories and poems," and some of the students published their own books. During one presentation on SOARS, the parents asked an 11-year-old visually impaired student to autograph copies of her own book.

Project Next Generation

These projects used a model of service that combined mentoring and technology in public libraries to reach at-risk junior high students (6th to 9th grade). After FY 2000, the state funded 18 of these sites as a Jesse White, Secretary of State, sponsored initiative. In FY 2002, the state continues to fund 16 programs, and LSTA is funding an additional nine projects.

Through regular meeting times at the public library, the students created numerous products and activities using technology. Among these were a sesquicentennial web site for the city of Bloomington, dioramas, Internet scavenger hunts, books, photography, poetry slams, Power Point presentations, and greeting cards. Students also learned to navigate the Internet and use digital cameras and Alpha Smart keyboards.

Overall, program mentors and students report improvements in self-esteem and school grades. At the Bloomington project, staff reported that the students now "aren't shy about asking questions or getting help from each other or from the mentors." "Students are not as quiet and get along better .... They are more amiable and have taken on more responsibility for each other." A similar result was reported at the Elmwood location. "They're becoming more comfortable with each other, making friends." At the Grand Prairie site, the school recommended working with the special education class that had eight students failing the seventh grade. Project Next Generation mentors concentrated the first hour of each session on homework help; all eight students passed the seventh grade. Parents of students attending the program at the Marrowbone library reported that "the kids are learning things and using the skills at home on the family computer." Site

mentors said "now that the kids are used to digital cameras, they are asked to take pictures at school of various activities to be downloaded onto the school's web site."

The impact of the project is reported from each site. At the conclusion of one year of the program, "the students didn't want to stop, so the students taught senior citizens how to use the computers and send email." At a poetry slam event, "students took notes on Alpha Smart keyboards and then wrote articles submitted to local media as public relations." At Elmwood, mentors observed that "earlier, the kids would always question us about email or starting a program. Now they are confident when they sit at the computer." Only a few students knew each other coming into the Rockford project, but "students learned about each other -- strengths, weaknesses, character - as they worked in groups creating a business plan, and they learned about themselves as they explored their favorite hobby or role model."

The positive environment allowed for learning, making friends, and having a good time at the library. The staff at Quincy Public Library noted that "from the very first day, you could hear laughter and the sound of the mouse clicking, and watch them make faces as they took each other's picture." Mentors feel that "Project Next Generation has become a window for participants to view the world of technology and explore its many uses in today's world."

Collection grants

Illinois has used targeted small grants to support collection development across all types of libraries. As noted in the description of LSTA offerings, these mini-grants included collection grants for schools, equipment to books, book start, and collection connection. In addition, some major grants were submitted in the open grant category during the five-year period. The majority of these were in FY 1998, as collections became a focus of mini-grant programs in other fiscal years. As with technology, funds for library materials also were nested in service grants for specific clientele.

The most significant collection grant during the five-year period was a $500,000 award to the City of Chicago schools to weed and update library collections. Local schools matched the LSTA

funds dollar for dollar, resulting in one million dollars for materials expenditures in Chicago public school libraries in FY 1998.

The major collection grants showed an interest in expanding multicultural and foreign language resources. Auburn Public Library and the schools and Barclay library focused on world cultures, while Indian Prairie library concentrated on resources for new Asian immigrants. Three Chicago Public Library branches added Native American contemporary authors, and Highwood Public Library established a Cultural Resources Exchange with multiple language materials in all formats. Foreign language collections were expanded in the Wheaton, Bartlett, Des Plaines, and Addison public libraries.

Shared, rotating collection projects make up another category of collection grants. A consortium of rural libraries created rotating collections of videotapes and audio books, and Savanna Public Library District and Sterling Public libraries coordinated similar rotating collections audio books for several rural libraries. Improving resources for seniors and to senior housing and institutions was the focus for Lincoln Public Library District, Willow Branch Township Library, and Putnam County libraries.

Special topic collections make up the rest of the major grants in this area. BroMenn Health Care library used a consortium of area reference librarians to provide guidance on developing the collection for its Cancer Information Center. A fourteen-library cooperative received funds for books and CD ROM products to support its center for readers advisory service. Vintage music in the CD format was the purpose of a grant to Peoria Public Library, and Bensenville library purchased web access to the General Business File ASAP, which provided access from home and the chamber of commerce. Dominican University was able to expand its library and information science collection in FY 2000. Evergreen Park Public Library is purchasing materials and information resources to support its Small Business Support Program, and Rend Lake College is enhancing its Children's Center collection for use on campus and by all residents in the area.

IMPACT OF YOUTH SERVICES AND TRAINING GRANTS

The LSTA evaluation included a study of individual projects to show more in-depth impact of funded projects. This section provides a sampling of projects from two categories: services for youth and training for users and library staff. Each project is briefly described with an explanation of outcomes. Since the local library is responsible for evaluation, the primary data sources used for each project were the grant reports and attachments.

Services for youth grants

Providing services and collections for young people are consistently present throughout the five-year LSTA cycle. As described earlier in the collection section of this report, specific grant offerings targeted improving collections for youth. Libraries offered a range of programming options for children, linked technology to youth services, and reached out to diverse clienteles. Partnerships between public and school libraries were prevalent, and linking with a variety of community groups was a natural occurrence in most of the projects. This section highlights sample projects that illustrate the impact of LSTA for youth, examining projects that extended school library hours, offered homework assistance, promoted reading, reached out to specific audiences, and built creative partnerships.

Extending school library hours

School libraries experimented with extending library hours outside regular school hours and daytime hours over the summer. Raccoon Grade School Library combined the extended hours with four summer story times, having a total attendance of 125. Although only open for 16 hours over the summer, 265 books circulated to children and parents. The school library is much closer than the two nearest public libraries, so the school library could offer a summer activity for rural children, for whom there are not many activities planned, and offer a summer location for local children to see their friends while using library materials. The interest in the school library continued into the fall when a Family Reading Night drew in 18 parents and 36 children.

The River Bend School District's EXTRA (expanding technology and reading activities) project also added late afternoon and evening hours at four school libraries for use by public. Nearly three-quarters of the students had no access to public library service. Media coverage reached an 800-mile radius. The extended hours were supplemented with technology training and workshops and events for teachers, students, and parents. Four out of five students (82%) in grades kindergarten through fifth participated in a minimum of one activity. Among those who also made use of the LRC were students and their families from the local parochial school and homeschooled students. The EXTRA hours open allowed the media specialist and her staff the time to work with families on an individual basis to expand their technology skills. Older students mentored community members and younger siblings on technology. "Viewing the Jim Trelease videos inspired some families to begin regular family read-aloud sessions, which were supported and encouraged by LRC personnel whenever possible." The project made such an impact on the users that the school district picked up funding for extra hours for the remaining seven months of the 2000-2001 school year.

Homework assistance

The Joliet Public Library Families in Reading project centered on homework help for children at the library for grades one through five. During the summer months, reading help was available for students through the eighth grade. To qualify, students had to be reading below their grade level. The project had the added benefit of involving high school students as helpers in the

homework center. Teachers reported improvements in students, as did parents. One noted that "this is wonderful. I see my kids doing better." The project coordinator reported that the homework center computers are constantly busy after school and on weekends. "Children wait impatiently for their turn. More and more we see parents sitting with children and playing some of the educational games we provided. Once in awhile we see families who have a child in tutoring coming to the library on their own to use the computers and other resources." The families got library cards and used them to check out books. "Children are so excited about technology, and we were able to use that technology to 'hook' kids and their families into reading." The final report indicated many positive comments from parents. "One mother told us that it was her son who reminded her about the tutoring sessions in order to make sure she got him to the library. She said that he was now motivated to read and that he was better prepared for school." Another mother said that her daughter's attitude toward reading improved and that her grades are much better in school. A third parent said, "The tutor program . . . has greatly helped my nine-year-old daughter. She has really improved in her reading. I am very thankful that the Joliet Public Library has a tutoring program. I really can't say enough good things about it!"

A similar project was sponsored by the Ela Area Public Library District. BRIDGES (books, resources, individuals determining goals for educational success) focused its efforts on a homework center with computers. To promote the service and introduce children to the library, all the fourth and sixth graders (1166 students from 45 classes) came to the library to participate in Library Safaris. The grant funded transportation to the library. The safari also was given for 20 homeschoolers. The safari theme was carried throughout the orientation, with three key elements: the overview of the Terrain (tour of the library), Hidden Treasure (using electronic resources), and Imagine You are There (booktalk on adventure stories about animals and survival). After coming to the library, students were invited to return and complete a scavenger hunt "Bringing Amani to Safety: An African Adventure." "While the first classes to attend the safaris did not know exactly what to expect, we heard that the later groups eagerly awaited their turns to come. Some students wore animal print clothing and barrettes." "Many members of the staff thanked us for

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

involving them in the process." "Literally hundreds of parents were involved in this process [child's educational success] through the library safaris [as chaperones] and follow-up scavenger hunts."

The library had set up a tent area for the safari month. "The students enjoyed coming in after school to sit and hang out in the tent area. During the day, we also noticed adults resting in the area; one 50-year-old man was found resting on the floor, with his head on an animal print pillow, comfortably reading a book . . ." A total of 351 students completed the scavenger hunt. The interest and excitement generated from the project spread to other children. "Many teachers commented on how much they learned about the library by sitting in on the presentations. One teacher set a Saturday morning when she would be in the library to assist her students in completing their scavenger hunts." Students from other grades asked to participate in a scavenger hunt; fifth and seventh graders could use the same hunt, and library staff designed a junior safari for students in grades one through three.

The Library Safaris did bring students back for homework help. Parents and teachers have called to tell the library how much progress their children and students have made using the resources. "Teachers direct students without home resources (technology, personal assistance, resource materials) to us." National Honor Society students volunteered in the homework center. Because of the school personnel's expanded understanding of the library's service, teachers often directed parents of specific students to the library. "We were very pleasantly surprised by the overwhelmingly positive response from parents; they commented on what a great learning experience it was for them as well as their children." "One parent came in to say that her son had a very bad attitude and was almost ready to have major problems when he went to the homework center. His attitude changed completely because of the strong role model of the student tutors."

Promoting reading

Park Forest library used a major marketing campaign to get the message out that reading is for ages one to three. The Bring Your Child to the Library program had an attendance of 371 parents and children with varying ethnic and economic backgrounds. Thirty new library cards were issued. Many parents commented that they were not aware that even toddlers could get library

cards. One family said, "We're so glad the library is taking a leadership role in bringing the joy and usefulness of reading to young children." The business community also was enthusiastic in its support as shown by the donations for the kick-off program, and the project prompted an expression of pride in the library from community residents. One man made a special trip to the library just to tell the director of youth services how proud he was of the library and what it was doing for the community. The message of reading with young children reached a potential population of more than 200,000 through the media. "Door hangers" placed on residential doorknobs seemed the most effective method to reach the intended audience. Librarians perceived that this project enhanced the public view of the library. In a community survey conducted during the project, 87 percent of respondents said the library was one of the most important amenities in the Village of Park Forest.

The Book Pals project used a books and plush animals and dolls to get kids involved in reading and writing at the St. Anthony Grade School. Focused on second grade students, the library project used Book Pal bags for checkout. The bag contained a book, a plush character (the book pal), and a journal. The student reads the book and shares the plush character with the family. Each child is then responsible for recording in the journal where the book pal has traveled (such as grandma's house) and to whom he or she read the story (such as a sibling or parent). In the initial seven weeks of the project, 78 students participated and 175 checkouts were recorded. With multiple readings of the books recorded in the journals, a conservative estimate is that the stories had been read about 350 times. The librarian felt that "perhaps this is 350 times that a child has been connected to another person or enjoyed reading rather than watching TV." The project "bridged the gap between reading and writing through the use of journals kept by pupils." Also, the approach "provided a balance of softness and touch to a child's high tech world."

The students themselves reported on the impact of the project. Travis received the Book Pal set with the D.W. character and the book *DW's Lost Blankie*. He was indignant because he thought the character was sissy for him. He grumbled, but took the Book Pal home. When he returned the next week, he was all excited. His four-year-old sister hugged D.W. and "made" Travis

read the story to her four times. He said to the librarian, "I told my sister she would grow up and be able to read like me some day, too!" Another child with a very difficult home life had been held back in school. His father worked evenings, and his eleven-year-old sister assumed much responsibility for John. When John returned a Book Pal bag for the first time, he said two things to the librarian: "I slept with Tigger every night" and "Where are more books about Winnie the Pooh?"

Choosing the second grade for the program seemed to be the ideal age. The children are independent readers, but still young enough to hug a plush animal. Since the goal was to encourage reading, students are able to read the books themselves, rather than have parents read to them. "This makes the child feel important, especially when he or she reads the book to a younger sibling." Another strength of the program was the connection between the students and adults who also enjoyed the same book at one time. Several students were surprised that their babysitters knew the story that they read to them. One child reported that she "didn't know my babysitter knew about Babar." On Grandparents Day, Ashley brought her grandmother to the library. She was excited because her Book Pal that week had been Corduroy, and her grandmother had told Ashley that it was one of her favorite stories. Ashley wrote in the journal that "it was fun reading a story my grandma liked, too."

The writing component of this project helped show the creativity of the students. Many of the students wrote in first-person and told a good story. "I ate chicken and mashed potatoes and green beans for supper and Arthur sat on the chair next to me and ate that too." "Curious George went camping with us. He roasted marshmallows. But he didn't want to sleep in the tents, so he slept on the picnic table under the stars." Book Pals helped students make the connection between reading and writing. The journal entries also showed that students were reading their books three and four times to different family members. "This teaches the child that a good book can be enjoyed over and over."

Clearly, this project inspired enthusiasm for reading and writing and resulted in shared reading experiences between the children and siblings and adults. Perhaps the most striking

aspect of this project, however, is the fact that all these benefits were derived from a grant for only $1,000.

Some grants were awarded for reading incentive programs supported with technology. One example of this type of program was the PAWS for Reading project in the Berwyn North school district. Using the Accelerated Reader program, all sixth through eighth grade students were welcome to participate in the program that operated during extended school library hours in the morning and afternoon, as well as during the regular school day. A pretest (STAR) was used to develop skill-appropriate reading logs.

The numbers tell the story of this project after three months of use. Within the first months of the program, 181 students had participated. Among the outcomes reported were increased reading achievements, reading in a variety of genres, improved vocabulary, and enjoyment of reading. Participants were reading for a minimum of 30 minutes per day, plus had the option to participate in extended time before and after school in the library. Computer-based tests are taken after reading a book. Of the 637 tests taken, 86.1 percent were passed. Twelve students passed every test they took, and 73 percent of the students reached their first reading goal. More than half the students had their logs upgraded to higher levels. In the first few months, some students had raised their reading level and passed tests a full grade level above their original test level. Students reported improved reading and grades going up (97 percent reported improved reading skills). Student-teacher contact time in reading instruction also increased.

Teachers had positive comments about the impact of the project. Listed below are some of the reactions and reported results from participating teachers.

- After the students took the test, selected and read their first books, I was surprised by how much they enjoyed the experience. Many of them were really excited about finishing a book and understanding it.
- My students have asked when they get to take the STAR test again They feel they've improved and want to see how much.
- 90% of my students have really bought into the program. They're excited about the books and actually like taking the tests.
- My students beg me for five more minutes to read during class.

- When they pass a test, they're like little kids. My seventh graders have to show me the printout immediately because they're so proud of doing so well. For some of them, it's the first time they've been successful.
- The kids have been very positive about how many "good" books we have. It's funny when you realize that most of the books they're talking about were already on the shelves, but they ignored them.
- Some of the students need a place to go after school, so the extended library time is helpful. The library welcomes them. Sometimes they don't want to leave, even though it's after 4:00 p.m.
- One of my students started out reading 3.5-4.5 in September. Three months later she's passing tests on books up to 7.0.
- One of my "problem" boys told me that "reading's not work -- I'm lazy and I don't like to do school work." He's passed several tests now and is right on track to meet his goal.
- "I thought I was doing this to help my lower students, but some of the bright ones are really being pushed. They were really proud when they tested so high and now they're reading books they wouldn't have touched before."

Finding enough low-level materials at the middle school interest level is an ongoing challenge for the project. The program has the benefit, however, of linking students to the public library. Students were asking for lists of titles so they could go to the Berwyn Public Library and find additional books.

Of course not all the student comments were positive. Some mentioned liking to choose their own books rather than those in their reading log, and others noted they didn't like the tests or the point system used in the program. Other comments from the written survey, however, illustrate the positive aspects of the project.

- I like discovering favorite authors and reading sequels.
- I learn a lot of new things from the books I read.
- I like AR because we get time to read and learn new words.
- I like it because reading relaxes me.
- I like reading longer books. The more you read, the more you know.
- I brought up my reading grade. My parents are proud of me because I'm getting good grades.
- I like it because I read a lot better than I used to and I read for enjoyment now.
- I love AR because it's helping me boost my grade and making me like more books.
- I like it because it helps me get more interested in books and improves my reading level.

Reaching special populations

English as a second language (ESL) families were targeted in projects for youth. Des Plaines Public Library's Partners Promoting Reading Pleasure conducted a four-week summer program to promote reading and the library for primarily minority populations. In cooperation with the Plainfield schools, 46 children from grades two through five participated in the series. Buses were hired to transport the children to the programs. The initial family night resulted in nearly 150 parents and children learning about the library and its programs. A mix of reading and creative activities enriched the children's understanding of literature as well as their personal enjoyment of books. At the end of the program, a family program was given where the kids told what they liked best about the program and explained the project. A bilingual program assistant, personal telephone calls in English and Spanish, transportation, and parental involvement were cited as key factors in the success of the project. The partnership continues with the school, including participating in meetings with teachers, assignment alerts, homework carts, and book bags. A display and memory book created during the project will be used at the schools.

Written comments from parents illustrate the impact of the summer program. Some of the questionnaires were completed in Spanish. One mother wrote: "My child was hesitant to come to the program initially, but decided that it was awesome after the first class! He is a good reader, but is usually reluctant to read. I think that the stories and the projects selected for the summer program encouraged him in his reading." Another family had enrolled two boys in two different age levels of the program. "When I told them I had done this, they were upset with me. Then they attended and immediately there was an attitude change. They have loved the program and have been eager to go. They have enjoyed showing other family members their creations." The activities and reading were important to the children. A parent remarked, "My son has been very enthusiastic with this program because he learned new activities and he shared them with his little brother. He also improved his reading, and he likes to read books more now and share the stories of the books with us."

A brief written evaluation was used with the children as well. Among the 19 forms returned by second and third graders, 14 said, "yes, they liked all the books used." In response to the

question "after this summer program what do you think about the library?" students wrote: "It was cool," It was fun," "I really like it," and "We have a lot of things to do now." Evaluations from the fourth and fifth grades (14) showed that eight liked all the titles used and six liked three of the four titles. In response to the question "What will you tell your teacher and classmates at Plainfield about this summer program?" students wrote: "I'll tell them we did cool stuff." "It was very fun. I wish I could still go." "I improved reading. It was fun." "If it comes again, you should join it."

The project generated use of the library's collection. All participants had library cards. The project director reported that "probably one of the most exciting projects the older group of children did was the scavenger hunt in the library. The purpose of this activity was to familiarize the children with the different sections offered in the Youth Services department. After the activity, the children commented on how they didn't know certain areas existed. Throughout the four-week program, the children would often ask if they could do that activity again." "They not only felt comfortable in knowing where to locate materials, but also were made aware of the many different library resources available to them with their library card."

The Diamond Lake School District took a different approach with its Literature to Go grant. For this grant, the elementary schools bought English and Spanish books on tape for their dual language program. For the middle school, the focus was on using audio books to keep up with classmates in the language art's classroom by listening to the audio tapes while following along in the book and enhancing book report reading. Pleasure reading titles also were available. Oral reports to the librarian were required, and the librarian could see the students' pleasure as they checked out more tapes. "The staff has noticed a difference in the quality of the book reports given by these students. The students are giving more details and have a better comprehension of the plot and characters than when reading the book independently." "They tell us on a daily basis that they like the books and tapes they listen to." The materials were "being used by teachers and students in increasing numbers as they see the benefits and enjoyment they can derive from this program." Because of the limited librarian staff time, it was hard to do the entire check-out process. As a result, a fifth grade student helper program was started, and these students were taught how to

check in and put the materials away for future use. "This actually resulted in a plus for the students involved as they are learning some skills they would not have otherwise acquired!"

Student comments about the program show its value. Listed below are comments from students in grades three through eight.

- I like to go to check out books . . . because they are fun and you can learn to read hard words.
- I like Literature to Go because I like reading books and tapes and to read harder words.
- Literature to Go books are fun because you get to listen and the tapes have lots of emotion.
- I like LTG because it helps me read and sound out words.
- I like Literature to Go and I hope it goes on until the school doesn't run anymore.
- I can't read some words and on tape I know how to say it.
- It helps me keep up with my homework.

While the project started as focus for "at risk" kids, it was quickly opened to all students. This meant that "it does not 'mark' the struggling student, as other students are involved in books on their own level. It has also heightened the excitement level for the program and made it more appealing to students, especially those that needed the extra push to get involved." "The statements of children and their growing desire to check out and listen to tapes is a strong indication of their increasing desire to be involved with good literature. We have also noted children struggling in school who refused to sign up at the beginning of the program. These students have seen the interest of others and have since returned signed contracts so they too can be part of the program."

The Pere Marquette correctional institution for juvenile offenders created the Capture the Power of Reading program to help 79 at-risk students. The librarian worked to overcome bureaucratic hurdles to help troubled youth, and the grant empowered kids who typically did not read to read, test, and succeed in the Accelerated Reader program. "Many students who were poor readers participated in this program. Initially, even the lowest level tests were difficult for them to pass. Teachers and library staff were very supportive of these students and encouraged them to choose another book and try again." Soon, those who persisted were not only passing tests, but were getting 90 and 100 percent.

"Students exhibited an enthusiastic response to this program from the beginning. I noticed behavior that was contrary to the usual attitudes our students have about books and reading. I was afraid that they would give up the whole idea once they had failed a test but I was so wrong about that." After failing on the first test, the student would often be challenged to try again. "'Okay,' they would say. 'I'm getting another book and I bet I'll pass the next one.' And wonder of wonders, they usually did!" The librarian could report that after 20 years of trying to convince reluctant readers to read a whole book, it was suddenly happening on a daily basis. "A lot of youth at this facility have never experienced even average success in any part of their schooling so far. For them to excel in a structured reading program is remarkable to them."

Student comments support the impact of the program at the correctional center. "I especially like the library because it has a wide selection of books and all the books I've read were interesting and help my time go faster. I'm not the type to ask for help, but Mrs. Ganter is so nice that when I'm having trouble looking for something, she offers me help and encourages me to read harder books. I took her advice and I've passed the hardest test here!" Another student said, "I like the library because it has a variety of fascinating books . . . that allow you to . . . strengthen your brain power . . . That's why I'm going to stick to reading and accelerated reading for my own sake." The grant project helped attract students to the library. "The reason I like going to the library is because of that reading program. That's a fun idea to read a book and then take a test on a computer. Whoever thought about it was a smart person . . . It's good we have something to do to expand reading ability so that when we get out of here, we will be more interested in reading." The project has an impact on the future for these kids. As one young man

wrote, "It's a chance for me and the rest of the kids here to read and accelerate our reading habits. The library gives some of us a positive change. It's something to take back to the outside world."

Partnerships

Most of the projects in the youth category included partnerships with internal and external stakeholders. School and public library collaborations were the most common, but several projects worked with multiple community groups. The North Suburban Library System built a creative partnership with the Kohl Children's Museum for science learning. Community of Learners offered unique family learning opportunities using the library and museum as vehicles to accomplish this. The reach of this project was wide, with 1,560 children receiving free passes to the museum and hundreds of children, parents, teachers, and caregivers attending workshops at the library and taking field trips to the museum. For some libraries, it was the first time field trips were offered to young patrons. Some of the libraries used the free passes to the museum as an incentive for children to get library cards. Some library workshops were targeted specifically to local caregivers. Vernon Area Public Library offered a workshop for district preschool teachers; the majority of preschools responded, with 17 schools represented.

Fun hands-on activities in science were featured at the library programs. One librarian observed that "the projects were inherently interesting (dinosaurs, our five senses, and simple machines)." Museum staff brought a plethora of activities that were designed to make discovering science fun. Library staff had plenty of compliments for the museum staff. Those who presented the programs "were wonderful. They showed up on time, were creative and flexible, and displayed superb rapport with the children and adults they worked with." The Fox River Grove Public Library District reported enthusiastic children and parents and lots of activities to choose from. "The only thing stopping them [the children] from doing everything was lack of time. We had moms dragging their children away, and one child was in tears because she couldn't get the diplodicus's head just right. We decided to freeze her experiment for future attempts at genetic re-engineering, and she walked away happy." Mount Prospect patrons liked the hands-on aspect of the program, "which allowed children to explore independently and make their own scientific discoveries." Since hosting the programs, the libraries have had several requests for more science programs.

Reaching underserved populations was a component of the project. Several libraries targeted their low-income families for the field trips and in-house programs. The project director

noted that "even libraries in areas normally considered middle class found this project appealing to their at-risk populations." The field trips attracted the immigrant population in Glenview. The community reports over 42 different languages being used in homes. Primarily the participants in the Glenview Program were first-generation immigrants with their young children. "Even though the Kohl Children's Museum is just one suburb over in Wilmette, it seems that the idea of a bus trip - where all the details were planned out - made it an inviting opportunity for our patrons who are new to the area and who have limited English skills." Mount Prospect Public Library also reached the underserved with the project. "The families who attended were from an underserved area of our community and have only minimal exposure to area educational institutions such as the Kohl Museum."

Another LSTA project brought together local police departments and the public library. Ela Area Public Library worked with area police departments to create a web site that focuses on Internet crime prevention and awareness, the law, and children and the Internet. As is the case with many of the youth services grants, this one had appeal to all ages and is reaching a wider audience than just parents. The prevention project quickly captured the attention of users. "Several individuals have contacted the library over the past few weeks indicating that the site has helped them better understand various Internet safely issues. For example, a site visitor recently heard on the news about yet another computer virus being spread by email attachments. Visiting the "Email and attachments" section provided the patron with the information needed not to fall victim to this type of virus." Another user indicated that "the site helped alleviate their fears related to making online purchases by providing information about how to avoid becoming a victim of online scams." The police departments also served a key role in content creation and maintenance on the site. "The officers also respond to online questions presented by the community and are updating online materials as appropriate." The project makes use of an online survey for ongoing evaluation.

A more traditional, but still powerful partnership, is one between libraries and Head Start. The Two Rivers District Public Library expanded its summer reading program to reach children who

participate in the Head Start free lunch program. The ten-week program brought the children one day a week to the library with the Head Start minibus. For this project, the numbers tell a lot of the story. In total, there were 1,664 library visits by the Head Start children, and 37 programs were offered during the morning and afternoons. In addition, for older kids, an early evening program was featured, with an average of 43 at each of the nine evening programs. The 237 kids that signed up for the program read 5,234 books over the ten-week period. Juvenile circulation overall went up by more than 30 percent for the two summer months from the previous year. Nonfiction use more than doubled during that period.

The project director reported on the enthusiasm of the children. "There were an average of 20 children who came from the lunch program and they were so excited to come they would eat their lunch early and arrive at the library about 45 minutes ahead of scheduled program." For each program, the library would include a simple craft and show the children how to do computer activities. Also, if some of the performers came early, they would talk to the children about what they did and how they learned it. "We found some of the kids even discovered that they enjoyed reading just for fun."

The project partners reported that the "impact on the targeted group with the free lunch program was great. Many of these children were not library users. They ranged in age from two to 15 years old. To get the transportation to the library and go away with good feelings about the library and to want to come back were wonderful to see." One boy who had started coming with his sister ended up coming to each of the three program series -- morning, afternoon, and evening, and he still is a near daily library user. "He is asking if he can help us, and I feel we will have him forever as a faithful library user, because he really enjoys being here."

The library board clearly saw the value of this program, as it budgeted funds to continue the project during the summer of 2002. This grant is another example of powerful outcomes for very limited funds. The grant was for just $2,650, and the majority of that went to improve the library collection. This project illustrates how a partnership can extend resources in a community. It also shows, as is the case for most LSTA grants, that the grant funds become a catalyst for

staff and community involvement. Rarely does an LSTA grant cover all direct and indirect costs for the projects, especially in the case of staffing. The project director summed up the value of the project for extending library services. "Our LSTA grant has affected the focus of our library by showing us that just because you build it they will not necessarily come. They need to have a reason to come in the door and then they find they like it and then they will come. LSTA funds helped us get them in the door."

Training grants

Training grants have been awarded throughout the five-year period in two basic categories: training for library staff and training for library users. This section identifies funding themes in each of these two categories and gives brief information on a number of training projects. A more in-depth analysis of a sample of major grants also is used to illustrate impact of training activities within the state.

TRAINING FOR LIBRARY STAFF

The magnitude of the effect of LSTA funding for training in the Illinois library community is difficult to summarize. Just using figures from a sampling of grants shows that a massive number of hours of learning opportunities were offered and that thousands of library staff have participated. Projects like national teleconferences, such as those offered on adaptive technology and change, reached a national audience, while use of multiple delivery methods within state made training accessible to even the remotest libraries.

The impact of training activities occurs at multiple levels. The first, as described in the grant reports, is the immediate impact on the learner. The other two levels, however, are less easily documented. Individuals carry forward the impact of training by sharing information from training opportunities with other library staff and stakeholders. This extends the effect of training to a much larger group than just those that attended the events. At another level, the ultimate desired outcome of training and learning is improved delivery of library services. The logical link between increased knowledge, better skills, and expanding attitudes has been documented and endorsed by the education field for generations. Given the concentrated and continuous funding of training

opportunities, LSTA funds in Illinois have influenced the library community and ultimately the library users.

The overriding theme that emerges from analysis of the major training grants is diversity of delivery mechanisms and training designs. National audiences to an individual have been targeted for instruction, and technology and multiple venues are used to take training to all corners of the state. Training opportunities range from one-hour sessions to week-long training institutes. All levels of staff have had learning opportunities, and training has affected library staff in all types of libraries. Continuing education credit and college credit are given for a range of activities.

Bring in an expert and grow with a pro

The impact of LSTA in the training category is not completely a story of major grants. Three of the five years of LSTA have included funding for local learning opportunities through *bring in an expert* and *grow with a pro* mini-grants. A total of 990 of these mini-grants were funded, with the largest number in FY 1999. All types of libraries have participated in these grants. Table 2 shows the distribution of the grants by type of library.

A total of $3,056,436 has been awarded for these grants, with over half awarded in FY 1999. The average grant size was $3,612 across the three funding years. Funds were used to hire a variety of expertise. The majority of these grants (36.0%) supported one-on-one learning in primarily three categories: technology, building planning, and long-range planning. Staff development, including group Internet and computer training, was the focus in nearly one-quarter of the grants (24.4%). This means that learning opportunities at the local library level were primarily funded by LSTA mini-grants; the major library staff training grants were used primarily for cooperative training projects. The combination of these mini-grants and major LSTA grants create a full spectrum of training strategies to help meet the diverse learning needs of library staff in Illinois.

TABLE 2

Distribution of expert/pro grants by type of library
FY 1999, 2000, and 2002

	Academic	Public	School	Special	System	Total
FY 1999	28	350	124	18	13	533
FY 2000	10	185	37	10	7	249
FY 2002	17	157	18	7	9	208
TOTALS	55	692	179	35	29	990

State and system sponsored training

New or inexperienced librarians are the focus of two week-long institutes funded by LSTA. Annually, the Small Public Library Management Institute works with approximately fifty public library directors and managers working in small communities; many do not have a graduate degree in library science. School and public librarians are the focus of another annual institute that has a strong component on seeking and writing grants. In both cases, the participants gain needed knowledge and skills to be more effective on their jobs. Another important outcome of these institutes is the development of a network of colleagues to support and mentor participants once they return to their libraries. Rural librarians also were targeted when Illinois cosponsored the national Rural Libraries Conference in the southern part of the state in 2000. Library staff came from 14 states to attend the meeting.

Regional library systems deliver a full range of workshops with their state funding, but LSTA funds also are used to extend learning opportunities. Examples of this include the North Suburban Library System's institute for school library staff which resulted in new skills for 150 participants and a trustee training series in Northern Illinois Library System that created mentoring teams of library staff and trustees. Chicago Library System produced a design for an Illinois library and museum conference that identified issues and functions common to both types of institutions.

60

Another example of system-sponsored training was the Suburban Library System's Universal Access workshops on ADA web site compatibility. The three workshops were presented by staff from EASI (Equal Access to Software and Information). Over 40 libraries and agencies were represented at the workshops, and the workshop was made accessible to a larger group by placing the videotapes (close-captioned) and all print materials from the workshops on the system's web site. An electronic mailing list was developed by the workshop presenters to encourage post-presentation communication. As one workshop participant noted, "I left with a different understanding of ADA compliance and the importance of it. We always say we have to be accessible to the disabled. Now we are getting the means to do it." For all three workshops, over 95 percent of respondents said the program provided new information.

The Alliance Library System takes its technology training on the road for member library staff and volunteers. Using a van for a mobile classroom allows the system to not only take the training to multiple locations throughout its large system area, but also provides for "fast response" training when needed by member libraries. The use of the mobile training center has reduced travel time of three hours to less than an hour for most library staff. Long term, the mobile classroom can be used by local libraries to offer computer classes for the public.

Videoconferencing

Extending training to a statewide and even national audience is possible because of an effective videoconferencing system within state library systems (VTEL) and resident expertise in satellite teleconferencing. LSTA funds have contributed to the development of two national continuing education series for librarians. The Dancing with Change and Soaring to Excellence series were developed by the College of DuPage via LSTA grants and are now offered nationally on a cost-recovery basis. Further, videos of the teleconferences are available for use locally following the teleconferences. The Soaring to Excellence series focuses on training for library support staff and reaches an international audience of personnel from all types of libraries. Annual estimates of reach for this series is over 10,000 people per program.

The College of DuPage also has worked with the Illinois State Library and regional library systems to provide for-credit library technical assistant (LTA) classes to multiple locations using the VTEL system. Start-up costs provided support for participants in the first two years of the program, and the project is now cost-recovery. Students participating in the courses can receive a LTA Certificate after completing eight courses and field experience. These credits can be applied toward a Library Technical Assistant Associate in Applied Science Degree from the College. This degree in not readily accessible in other states.

During its two years of LSTA funding, 156 students participated in the LTA project, representing systems with 1,496 libraries in 86 counties. The students came from all kinds of libraries. Some had not been to school in many years while others had a variety of academic experiences. Some had been with the library for more than 20 years, but others had only a few months of library experience. More than 80 percent of the students stayed with the LTA classes. The written comments from students illustrate the value of this learning opportunity.

- It gave me the opportunity to reenter the classroom setting and meet a variety of wonderful individuals around northern Illinois.
- This course has caused me to expect to provide better services to the public along with the abilities to do so.
- I've learned I can do this and I can do it well.
- I have found out the 'why' of things I have been doing for years.
- Being 46 and going back to school has been a major change in itself. It has made me more aware of libraries as a whole.
- It has helped me be more organized and be a better manager.
- It has put a personal bee in my bonnet and gotten me thinking about going back to school to continue my education.
- It has been a great boost for my self-image.
- This has brought me up in the eyes of the professionals at my library which changed how I was being treated.

A national audience was reached with a teleconference hosted by the DuPage Library System. Pathways to Independence through Assistive Technology brought together a panel of experts to demonstrate the latest technologies which allow the visually impaired to access information, develop job skills, and acquire technology literacy. This teleconference allowed participants to examine models of library and community collaboration to serve visually impaired.

62

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The program was downlinked to more than 40 states and more than 230 sites. Presenters showed small steps as well as "giant steps" libraries can take to better serve the visually impaired and presented models of community collaboration. A videotape was produced to allow others to view the teleconference at a later date.

Technology training

As noted in the discussion of the *bring in an expert* grants, local libraries have a continuous need for training in technology. In addition to the mini-grants for this type of instruction, some major grants have been used to reach a wider audience.

Shawnee Library System has developed three Regional Training Centers for training staff at member libraries. An unanticipated outcome of this project was that "some of the member librarians are actually exploring the idea of holding training classes (in the RTCs) for their patrons on how to search the library's electronic catalog, the Virtual Illinois Catalog, and the Internet."

Lincoln Trail Libraries System customized a technology training tied to its shared automation system. The Technology Certification Program is a competency-based training program for library staff. The 16-hour training course includes an in-class module, a student workbook, and a web-based component. During the grant year, the course was offered six times and attended by 49 staff people from 38 member libraries. The training helped to ensure that all LINC online members were at a similar point on the skills spectrum. "We now have a situation in which at least one staff member at 38 of our online library buildings have received this training and are operating with a higher level of confidence and ability in becoming more self-sufficient in their ability to install, configure, operate, and troubleshoot their PC work stations and managing their technology resources."

An important training development for Illinois was the creation of digitization standards and training by the University of Illinois Digitization Institute. This work, carried out over a two-year period, has become the basis for ongoing training in digitization planning and technology. The state-funded Educate and Automate library grants have been available for digitization projects.

For the FY 2002 grants, all libraries are required to attend training at the Institute in Urbana "to learn best practices for digital imaging or to prepare digitizing specifications." The Educate and Automate grants could include travel for this training. This in-state expertise is available due to the start-up funding from LSTA.

A consortium of libraries took a very customized approach to technology training for staff. Coordinated by Dixon Public Library, the project brought together public libraries from Ogle, Whiteside, and Lee counties (known as OWLs). These are primarily libraries serving small communities, with the largest serving a community of about 16,000 people. The project, Wise Old OWLs, devised a four-part training plan based on a skills needs assessment from the library staff in OWLs. Two mentors were used to conduct the training and provide ongoing support for individual learning about technology. The topics ranged from word processing to electronic publishing to new forms of technology, such as e-books. A major component of the project was the creation of a notebook of one-page reproducible tutorials on small applications of the software programs used. These were distributed to libraries throughout Illinois to share with staff and patrons. The mentors and participants in the training followed an each-one-teach-one model to build skills among staff in each of the libraries. Twelve libraries participated in the project.

The availability of the mentors for consultation throughout the learning grant was seen as an important element in the learning. The local mentors were seen as valuable because "there is a general reticence in asking outsiders for help." The mentors and project coordinators used all types of delivery methods to support the learning – group presentations, small group discussions, one-on-one assistance, email, newsletters, brochures, telephone, and fax.

The project coordinators reported that all participants "found that each workshop provided new and very useful information that they were able to incorporate into their regular activities immediately. New spreadsheets to keep statistics were created. Several librarians began designing more creative publications and signage. They all found that they were much more able and confident to assist their other staff members and their patrons with application questions." Immediate application of skills were reported after the workshops. Several of the libraries used the electronic

publishing software to improve library publications. At one library, "they had gone back ... and recreated their signage, their brochures, and even their written reports. They began to incorporate color and word art into their printed work." Both the board and the patrons noticed the changes and were complimentary about the results. The board of one library felt the training was so valuable that the library closed so all the staff could attend the workshops.

Letters from participating libraries support the project coordinator conclusions. Several participants reported sharing the information with staff, and the introduction to e-books was universally appreciated by staff and patrons. A sample of the comments from the letters demonstrate the power of this focused and well-planned training grant.

- Time is a problem for me, and finding training that covers what I need for my job is difficult. This grant gave me the impetuous and opportunity to dive into computer applications that I just did not take time to deal with.
- All of this training gave me computer skills and tips to pass on to my staff so that they could be more productive in dealing with their work and dealing with the questions of our patrons using computers. My board was very supportive of this and even agreed to closing this library for a half day so I can spend time training staff members.
- They're [the staff] making signs, brochures, booklists, etc. for the library that greatly enhance the visibility of the library to our patrons .... Learning the ins and outs of the software through your training made this possible.
- Becoming proficient with a new software application on one's own time is extremely time consuming and intimidating for staff. Therefore, a wonderful tool goes unused and the library either pays a printer for brochures and such or does without, neither of which serves the public well.
- The staff is exploring the uses of e-books in libraries .... It takes us to another level in using technology, which is very exciting .... As the staff shared their new knowledge with board members, it generated board discussion about new applications of technology that the library should investigate.
- Up until your classes, I knew only the very basics about using my programs .... [They] are now part of our daily use at the library. It is exciting to be able to use these to their fullest extent.
- Our schedules are so rushed. Even though we have had some of the demonstrated computer applications for some time, we had not had the chance to learn their capabilities. It was great to spend time with colleagues and learn in a hands-on manner what we can accomplish with these products.
- Many of the applications were workable within the small library budget. The digital camera seems as if it might easily solve our plans to web-page archive ... municipal activities

65

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

> and presentations ... and making our children's programming activities available to family members through CD ROM applications. I would not have thought it possible had I not attended this program.

In addition to the new technology skills learned, the educational experience sparked an interest in two participants to continue their educations. One staff person "decided she wanted to learn more about the library field as a profession and enrolled in the LTA program being taught by the College of DuPage" (a program also started with LSTA funds). This was the case for a second person as well who "decided that the LTA program would be of great benefit to her and her library."

Experimentation

LSTA funding allowed libraries to experiment with different instructional strategies and offer new training topics. Nowhere is this more evident than with the North Suburban Library System (NSLS). This system has a track record of using LSTA grants to develop innovative training opportunities. This philosophy of experimentation in training, however, is not limited to use of LSTA, as NSLS uses its operating budget on a regular basis to support new training designs and topics.

The system used a mentoring design for an internship program for attracting diverse staff in 36 member libraries. The purpose was to bring staff representative of the local community onto the library staff and then mentor the new staff person in order in help them become part of the library community. At the final meeting for the project, "it was evident from the comments of both the interns and the mentors that this grant was a significant step in creating a library staff that reflects the communities that each of these libraries serve." The project reached other libraries through presentations at ILA and ALA conferences.

The mentoring approach also was used with a NSLS project to improve African-American community libraries. Three library systems cooperated and provided consultants to work closely with one library in each of the systems. Assistance in studying collections, services, and administrative operations was provided, and the library boards were invited to participate in the

project as well. The final report explained that "this grant literally kept the doors open at one library, boosted computer access at one, and enhanced the collections at all three." Like many of the LSTA projects, the outcomes will become more evident in the years following the project. "Only time will measure the success of this project. The consultants spent a great deal of time with each individual library on both day-to-day activities and trustee education." "It is still to be seen how much use of the assessments the libraries will make. They will probably need some follow-up assistance from the systems. It is hoped that the currently open doors of communication between libraries and systems and among libraries will remain open."

Three high school students were hired for the summer in one of the libraries. It was so successful that one student has been retained as a permanent hire. "In the time that the new director has been on the job at North Chicago Public Library, she has been able to turn around a $130,000 debt and increase circulation by 15 percent." At one of the libraries, 90 percent of the youth collection had to be recataloged and rearranged.

Another experiment in training design and topic was the NSLS grant on work redesign. The goal of the project was to develop a model for analyzing the work performed in libraries and identifying ways to redesign the work processes to create a more positive work environment. The desired outcome was to design work that would attract and retain quality staff. Four libraries worked with the system on redesigning workflow and defining staff positions to reflect the changing work environment. The structure for the training was a series of workshop and work sessions, between which participants cemented their learning with reading and hands-on activities. Involving only four libraries kept the project focused, but a key advantage was "four libraries going through the same process simultaneously. We were able to call upon one another to compare experiences and challenges." Participants cited the use of a design team from the library, the sequential meetings with other teams, and individual coaching by the project consultant as critical design components in this training project. Participants responded positively to both the design of the training and the topic itself. "The notion of work redesign is an empowering and energizing

idea," said one librarian. Problem solving and achievement of a common goal were positive outcomes of the project for the library teams.

The work design project built on an earlier two-year effort by NSLS on the subject of change. For this project, the system worked with two library teams the first year and four the second year. A series of meetings and workshops, hands-on activities, and support from a project consultant were used to improve skills in communication, problem solving, team building, and dealing with change. The desired outcome was to have each library recast itself as a learning organization.

The ability to have a long time period for learning was an important element in this training project. It provided participants time to reflect and to apply the abstract concept of a learning organization. One person liked "that we have slowly been moving from broad, general, rather philosophical ideas to very real issues that involve our daily work. Somehow, our initially vague ideas for these grants have gelled into something concrete and very relevant to our library." A library director observed that "usually the library staff is not given the luxury of time to reflect. Perhaps the issue was that we did not know how to reflect without guilt." The project consultant noted, "The program is something of an educator's dream because hands-on practice, follow-up, and reinforcement are an integral part of its design."

Shared language and frames of reference were cited as beneficial to communication. "It has given us a common frame of reference to facilitate problem solving and service planning." "Our staff has evolved a common language and means to talk about thorny issues." "Personal concerns could be talked about openly, and tolerance for uncertainty was possible .... Library assistants became able to speak directly to the administrator, and, in turn, the administrator was able to listen and act on concerns that were previously unknown to her."

Learning more about each other in the workplace was an important outcome of the project. "Recognition of the differences in each of us (learning styles, personality preferences) has created an environment of greater appreciation and the ability to work together as a team toward consensus building and for the greatest good," according to one librarian. A library director noted that "practically speaking, we received great training in interpersonal relationships. The training

provided all of us a common language, which we now use." Frequent references were made to improved understanding of colleagues. "The concepts that we have explored ... have given me insight into how to encourage others to become more involved and appreciate their contributions." The project consultant observed that "participants learned the value of working together to come to valuable, usable solutions. It was quite satisfying to see that not only did participants learn these things, but they were anticipating and planning strategies for teaching what they were learning to the rest of their colleagues in the library." One participant echoed the need to help others see the vision. "The experiences provided by the grant fostered among participants a strong commitment to bringing the experience to the library as a whole."

The statements from the participants are a strong testament to the effect of this style of training. A sampling of these are listed below.

- This journey has given us all, in varying degrees to be sure, new insights, skills, and approaches to dealing with the challenging, the uncertain, and the unknowable. Like all adventurers, we have learned what to take and what to leave behind and are better equipped to take on challenges. We have gained confidence in our individual abilities and a deeper appreciation for the skills of our colleagues. We also want to tell all who will listen what an exhilarating adventure it has been.
- I realized how exciting and liberating it is to talk with others at work about work. Too often we do the doing of the job without looking at it, talking about it, and asking questions.
- One of my favorite lessons is that of synergy, the sum of the parts is greater than each individual part. Each person's input, when put together, creates a better solution than each individual person could create.
- Participation in the Learning Organization has been one of the most enriching experiences in my work life. I have learned a lot about work style and function, but most importantly, I have learned about myself. I have learned that I have the idea "spark" that starts people thinking, and this has greatly encouraged me to take risks at work.

- It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. It was trying at times. I am having the time of my life.
- The main effect the Learning Organization has had for me is to increase awareness .... When I do things I ask: Did I really communicate? Do I understand? Do they understand? What could have been done better? Did everyone get heard? It is worth trying to do things better.
- The learning organization is a place to learn about myself, to explore new ideas, to go outside the lines, to empathize with others, to learn about different points of view, to discuss, to mingle with all, to be a part and to become a whole.
- The Learning Organization has prompted many of us to become empowered and have used our empowerment to achieve.

69

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

> ☻ My journey with the Learning Organization has been very personal .... I've learned that control is not the end product you are striving for, but understanding what's really happening and learning from that .... Best of all, I've reaffirmed to myself that I truly love what I do and want to share that feeling with others.

Web-based training

There has been some interest in the potential of web-based training among the regional library systems. The Chicago Library System began in 1998 by offering one module of training in this format on web site design for libraries. The module was available for all libraries via ILLINET. The perceived advantage of web-based learning was that it could be accessed at any time, and "the online format of the training module provides for constant modification as cyber technology changes and evolves."

In 1999, Shawnee Library System experimented with web-based course development. It was perceived that is was relatively easy for trainers to deliver the content over the Internet using WebCT software. "web-based training simply offers another means of delivering training with maximum convenience." Only one course was developed, however, given difficulties with learning and applying the skills needed. A later report showed that the course had limited use, "largely because many librarians do not know it is available." This analysis also observed that

the Shawnee project was perhaps premature, as more training was needed on the using the software for course development, and because web-based courses were less accessible in 1999.

The interest in web-based instruction for continuing education continues. In 2001, Suburban Library System, working with three other library systems, began to build on the Shawnee project. They created LibraryU, a repository for library-centered, web-based training. The expectation was that modules for both library staff and library users could be produced. Further, this grant had strong training and marketing components. Significant progress has been made to date on all elements of LibraryU, although the most work remains for generating the desired training modules. A key question that emerges for libraries and library systems is "Who will create the training?" Often, these agencies hire trainers or consultants to develop training and then offer it using other

delivery mechanisms. It remains to be seen if this contractual model will be needed to bring web-based library continuing education to fruition in Illinois.

USER EDUCATION

The majority of user education grants focused on technology and electronic resources. Themes that emerged were partnerships among different types of libraries, information literacy, and service for seniors. Typically, grants that focused on computer training for library users included a component for library staff training as well.

Training sessions in public libraries have been offered to community residents of all ages. The North Suburban public library prepared a training lab, adding computers to its current LAN and utilizing a multimedia projection unit. The library also purchased and used a laptop for off-site registration and training. The classes centered on basic computer skills and introduction to the Internet. The library offered multiple classes weekly, and demand continued for the sessions. To enhance an already good relationship with the school district, the library designed classes for teachers. "The teacher training classes have been well attended, and the library has seen an increase in 'Assignment Alerts' for the reference desk and more teacher/librarian networking as well." Another customized offering was a series of classes for all sixth grade students. Overall, the project also was effective in reaching older adults, school classes, genealogists, and homeschoolers. Monthly training for staff also was a component of the project. The director observed that "staff training has improved library employees' computer skills and morale. Many are more willing to attempt computerizing tasks."

Madison Public Library, a small rural library, used a small grant ($2,272) to offer technology training for its community. There were two children's programs, and adult program series, and focused training for staff. Over 100 people were served by this grant; 30 adults completed the entire program series. The library continued to contact Title I teachers in the schools to bring children into the library to view CD ROM products.

A new library training facility allowed the Lincoln Library to begin offering a year-long series of training events. Nearly 300 residents and 15 library staff participated in the professional

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

computer training. The library held 33 web classes, 13 email classes, and four advanced communication classes. Although disappointed at the response from low income persons, the library is seeking better ways to communicate with that target group for future training. Seniors were the most responsive group to the offerings, especially when classes were held in the daytime. Three out of four participants returned evaluation forms after the training. The workshop met the interests and need for information on the topic for 98 percent of the participants. Exclusive of seniors, 90 percent felt the workshop would be of practical use on their jobs. Three-quarters of the participants reported that the classes will be of practical use in their personal life. Many of the class attendees have no computer at home.

A unique feature of this grant was that the trainer provided after class support by email and phone with a 24-hour response time, Monday through Saturday. This support continued for 30 days after the training. The library also offered a moderated forum on the library's web page, which required about 20 hours per week to moderate. Both features were heavily used. "A common criticism with many computer classes is that there is no follow-up and students with problems have nowhere to seek help .... Such a service encourages participants to use new-found technology skills, and thus retain and even advance them."

The Reddick Library experience with technology training exemplifies the strong demand for such services. The library had an advertising plan in place, but the classes filled before the press release could be sent to the papers. One class was filled by an entire family who were considering the purchase of a home computer. This made the training a family project both in choosing the equipment and how to use it. The age range of those participating was 7 to 70, with 104 residents taking advantage of one or more classes. Because of response, the library started offering evening sessions twice a month. Extensive staff training was included in project, which laid the groundwork for continued training opportunities for the public.

The most striking feature of the technology training project at the Venice Public Library was its creative needs assessment approach. They conducted a door-to-door survey that reached 1000 households. Not only did they learn about computer learning needs, they promoted the

library's technology services during the survey process. "Before the survey most of our patrons were children; since the survey, teens and adults have been coming to browse and check out the Internet." Twenty-four sessions were offered initially in eight-week series (two series for adults, one for children). Combined, 384 adults and children participated in one or more sessions of the training. The library felt it could have reached more if they had more equipment to use for the training sessions.

A coalition of school libraries and the public library worked together in the Carrollton school district to offer community technology training The school district hosted eight two-hour open labs each semester, and the public library added related materials to the lab. Attendance at the open labs increased over time and people reported hearing about the lab from a variety of sources, including a "significant number from word of mouth." High school students from the Information Technology/Library Club attended to help beginning computer users. "This was a valuable addition to the open labs because students were able to work one-on-one with those people." The coalition created a mailing list of interested community members for future lab sessions in the public library and schools.

A second year of the project added a unified name for the project: Libraries CARE. Specially designed classes and a public library web site were new features of the collaborative effort in Carrollton. The genealogy programs were the most popular, and an additional session had to be added to meet demand. All the information used and links from open lab sessions were posted on the web site so the community could use them even if they had not visited the lab or attended a program. The web site was operational only for the last part of the grant year, but already 350 hits had occurred on the web site. After University Extension presented a nutrition program, their site had over 80 hits from the library's web site in the first month. For the consumer program by Extension, 37 hits came from the library's web site one month. The project demonstrates the value of strong partnerships between the public library, schools, University Extension, and Lewis and Clark Community College and extended the resources of the groups by making use of both school

and public library facilities. This collaboration also led to a cooperative agreement to share materials for students not in a public library service area.

The Lyons School District took the lead for Internet training for the public. They offered 17 spring community classes and 16 the following fall. All but three met the minimum enrollment of five people, and many of the fall sessions had to be closed at the 15-person enrollment limit. Four of the classes were co-taught by a Spanish-speaking staff member. Each class consisted of two, two-hour sessions and used existing school library labs.

The program reached 125 community members, and 124 hours of instruction and eight hours of practice time were reported. A number of less experienced students even repeated levels and some took all of the classes offered. Twenty additional parents and community members attended demonstration events at the school district's TechFest. The project definitely reached those with limited computer experience. Only six of the original 25 enrollees had ever used the Internet. In the fall sessions, 34 of 49 participants had never used the Internet. About 40 percent of those attending the beginning and intermediate classes did not own a computer. At least half of the participants were senior citizens. One senior wrote, "The computer classes at our local junior college are usually filled before seniors are allowed to register." Others commented on the fact that they appreciated the slower pace of the library classes.

Written evaluation forms were used after each class. Four out of five participants reported that their skills had increased (86.1%). All but three of the evaluation forms indicated that students planned to continue using the Internet. A very positive attitude seems to have developed between the instructors and students. Many students commented on the teacher's expertise. The project director wrote, "Hopefully, this will be the beginning of increased support from the community for District 103's technology program." One public library administrator indicated that "this program has increased both the numbers of people using the Internet [in the public library] and the ability of those people to use it effectively."

The Lee Center Community Unit School District followed a similar pattern for reaching out to the community. They hosted three one-day sessions, limited to 16 people for each, at multiple

school locations. The trainer noted that "perhaps the most striking element of the training process was the initial apprehension of the participants, especially the adults," and observed that "you can see the sense of satisfaction on the faces of both students and adults as they learn each new technique. It is a sense of discovery." One adult who never sat before a computer in his life said, "This isn't as difficult as I thought it would be. I'm just a beginner, I know, but it's fun learning each new step. It just sort of builds on itself." The school district plans to continue the training with evening classes.

Underserved low-income and minority middle school students were the focus of a four-week computer camp at Aurora Public Library. A bus transported the teens to the high school computer lab, where two teachers worked with them on a variety of computer skills. They learned how to search for information on the Internet, how to use an URL and email, Internet courtesy, downloading text and images, and evaluating information gathered from the Internet. Twenty-nine middle school students participated. This was not as many as the library had hoped for, but they planned more publicity ahead of time in the schools before offering it the following summer. One indication of the value of the project was that both teachers indicated a willingness to participate in the program again. The majority of the students indicated on the final survey that they enjoyed using Internet and especially email. Over half said no changes were needed for the program. A school-administered test measuring computer and Internet skills showed improved skills among these students from the previous school year.

College-based training programs also were funded under LSTA. The Frontier Community College's Access Today project centered on effective use of online research tools and databases. They developed a new wireless LAN with laptop computers and offered workshops for the college's faculty, staff, and students and community users. The project drew over 1,000 registrants to more than 80 workshop sessions varying in length from 45 minutes to 7.5 hours. Four campuses were used. A total of 937 students and community members and 252 faculty took advantage of the training. The project director reported that Access Today "projected a modernistic image to today's technologically-minded young adults. This global learning experience helped reduce the

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

provincial barriers that encompass this rural southeastern Illinois area." A noticeable difference in the appreciation of the libraries by the younger set was evidenced by one young man's comment, "What is here is unbelievable." The project also helped to "create a smoother transferability to a larger university" for the community college students.

Heightened faculty awareness of what the library had to offer resulted in instructors promoting more classroom use of the electronic databases and equipment. One math instructor wrote, "I feel competent to use the equipment now. The ProQuest databases will be used in my classroom as well." A science instructor said, "I appreciate being able to pull these up in the classroom before assignments are made." A letter from a high school English teacher shows the value of the community college library offering training for the community. "I have just completed grading the senior term papers. The students did a superior job putting their papers together this year. The research my students did at the college contributed to their superior term papers. All students spent a minimum of one hour in the computer laboratory. The majority of my English 4 students will matriculate to Wabash Valley College. The time they spent in the computer laboratory in the media center will be extremely beneficial to them."

Shawnee College offered 34 workshop sessions on variety of resources for faculty and students. The library initially had trouble getting faculty to participate, but the college president got involved, attended, and encouraged staff and faculty to come. A positive outcome of the project was that the college president suggested that there needed to be a class of library information offered for credit. The library has begun development of that class. There were positive reactions from students who did participate, and the number attending increased as faculty started giving extra credit points for participation. Students commented on the evaluation forms about how much information there is available and the fact that they could use the databases from home. The college librarians felt that "the most notable and rewarding strength of this project has been the excitement the patrons have shown after attending one of the instruction sessions." At the end of the grant year, the library created an Internet-based instruction program on the library's web site for use by students and faculty.

Blackburn College trained rural faculty, teachers, and librarians on searching techniques for databases and the web, email, and web conferencing. Over 300 attended the training sessions, representing 41 libraries and schools and college faculty. Printed training materials were available on the college web site, and one-on-one assistance also was used . The project made good use of pre and post self assessments by participants. Prior to the training session, learners had the most confidence with "surfing the Internet." Lowest levels of comfort were with knowledge of specific databases, such as Ebsco, Infotrac, and OCLC. The average comfort level across all the items on the questionnaire and all participants fell between seldom and frequently felt comfortable with their skills.

The post assessment showed a dramatic change in perception by participants of their confidence in using the various electronic tools. After the sessions, the comfort level nearly doubled, meaning that in 80 percent of the cases, people reported improved confidence in their skills. When queried about the future, participants were mostly interested in the potential for "availability of help from project personnel" rather than borrowing materials or future training. A mailed questionnaire sent to the same participants later in the project had a 53 percent return rate. Prior to training, one third said that they had never used email. On this questionnaire, over half that had access to email prior to the training had never used it until after the workshops. Internet was being used by 82 percent for personal use and 87 percent for classroom and library use.

The Illinois Fire Service Institute Library's Internet outreach project concentrated on the training of Illinois fire service personnel, community groups, and community college librarians on electronic access to fire safety information. The staff traveled throughout the state, holding 79 workshops and 10 demonstrations in 64 cities. Representatives from 148 fire departments, 36 libraries, and 21 other organizations attended the workshops or demos. As a result of the training, reference inquiries to the library were five times more in the grant year than the previous year (1,669 compared to 300). The project staff also worked with 149 public libraries in all 12 regional systems to provide better links to fire safety information. The final report concluded that

"the project proved that Internet access, such as public access terminals at the local libraries, can link local fire service personnel, public, and community college libraries to the FSI library."

Information literacy

Improving information literacy curricula and teaching was another theme in the training category. At Fenton High School, a two-part project was designed that featured technology training from the public library for teachers and planning time for teachers to develop learning projects for the classroom. The project fostered teamwork and interdepartmental cooperation and linked the school and public libraries. The public library workshop focused on information literacy and how to link it to the classroom; 18 teachers attended. The majority of teachers indicated on the evaluation form that as a result of the training, "participants had a basic understanding of engaged learning and information literacy and how to put it into action in their classrooms."

The second component of the project provided for staff development time for teachers to work with a vanguard teacher, media specialists, and a public librarian to plan projects for the classrooms. Eleven teachers and five vanguard teachers participated in the project. A key factor in the success of the project was the time allowed for the teams to do the work. Substitute teacher time totaled 217.5 hours during the project.

A diverse set of projects were planned as a result. One social studies teacher chose to use a simulation with his Global Studies class. Another used a Power Point presentation on the 1930s to help prepare the students for reading *To Kill a Mockingbird* and scheduled students for library visits to do their research on that period of history. One project centered on students with low reading skills and was designed to help them as they went through the steps of the information literacy model. The special education teacher explored web sites and learned how to incorporate music into Power Point projects. An ESL teacher used Microsoft FrontPage to create a web page for the Foreign Language Department and continues to share that knowledge with rest of department.

The model of teachers planning collaboratively with librarians and with other teachers resulted in more than the actual classroom projects. Public librarians learned about the high school curriculum so they could improve library services to the school and students. Use of the public library was seen as a way to "set a pattern of public library use by high school teachers." One librarian noted, "This is the first time in years that high school teachers have brought their classes to the public library."

A similar training model was used by Southwestern Illinois College. They studied multiple information literacy standards and developed a project checklist for teams to use to plan student-centered learning experiences. Ten schools were involved in the grant, and each resulting classroom project "represented new creative thinking about the roles of teachers and the library media specialist and new ways to assess student learning." Before the final projects were used, the teams met for peer review and discussion.

Team members reported on the most important things learned from this project. A typical answer was "I learned the importance of the media center and media specialist in the curriculum." Many remarked about the value of doing the projects as a team. One team, who implemented their project before the end of the grant, was "amazed at how the students got involved, not only with their own project but also the other students' projects." Compared to earlier experiences by the teachers with engaged learning projects, this one reinforced the value of having the library media center as its focal point. Participants observed that they "got ideas and inspiration from each other and realized that as students learn, they also learn."

According to the project consultant, "previous research has identified three essential elements for collaborative planning and teaching: communication, time, and trust .... Time was the issue." The grant did provide funding for substitutes so participating teachers could attend team meetings and have project planning time. "The grant did demonstrate that information literacy skills and strategies can be integrated into the curricular areas ... given time to adequately plan, implement, and assess learning."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Because of the project focus on integrating the library media program into the curriculum, teams were asked if they changed the way the viewed the role of the library in instruction. The media specialists indicated that they learned how to participate in new ways in the learning process. One said, "It taught me how to structure many of the [student] tasks and activities that I have been doing for several years." Teachers found that there were several ways the library media specialist could be involved and that "the library media program has an important role in immersion-type activities." One team responded that "by combining the expertise of the classroom teacher with the media specialist you can plan and implement better, more educationally meaningful projects."

Moraine Valley Community College identified the training needs of educators in their service area through a survey to nearly 300 teachers in public and private schools. As a result of the finding, the college designed five workshops for teacher/librarian teams on Internet usage in the classroom and library, using the computer to empower students, multimedia tools, integrating technology in the curriculum, and creating web pages. A total of 15 workshops were given, either half or full-day events. There were 216 participants in the workshops, representing 41 schools. Half of the participants attended more than one workshop. The college was able to provide CEUs or Continuing Professional Development Units (CPDUs) for K - 12 educators in Illinois. As explained in the final report, "This served both as an incentive and an outstanding opportunity to obtain credits for teacher re-certification." A further incentive was the linking of the training specifically to the *Illinois Learning Standards*. Participants gave high marks to the trainer and appreciated the examples and practical applications provided by the librarians. For one teacher, the workshop became "just in time" training. Immediately after one workshop, she was able to help her students with a Power Point project that was needed for a state-level competition.

Rock Valley College partnered with area high schools to improve information literacy for students and teachers. A questionnaire was used prior to the training with students. Almost half of the students had not heard of a search engine or did not know what it meant. The concept of search strategy was not readily understood. The college offered a total of 16 training sessions on

library resources and nine sessions on using EdNet. Over 350 students were involved, and 12 teachers participated. The project also was featured at a regional system conference for school librarians.

The teachers said students were exposed to new information and technology that helped them with projects and conferencing. All felt their ability to evaluate electronic resources was enhanced. A school librarian observed that "the sessions demonstrated to both teacher and student the power of technology vis-a-vis learning." One teacher reported that "since we have Internet capability in my classroom, there are endless projects we can use that interface the learning that took place through this LSTA grant project. My entire curriculum can be and will be changed to make learning for my students more exciting, alive, timely, and appropriate to their needs." Another teacher reported that the project was "extremely valuable to teachers as well as students. For the teachers it was valuable to learn, practice, and develop projects that utilize different databases for our students." Teachers shared what was learned with other faculty. In one case, "many questions had been asked in the English department pertaining to the citing of web sources and evaluating information. I was able to share this knowledge as a result of this program." One school librarian summed it up, saying, "It would have taken me an enormous amount of time to learn all of this on my own. I will be eternally grateful."

"With the conferencing, they were able to find their assignment, post their assignment, and receive feedback through an electronic medium," according to one teacher. EdNet had "become another integrated form of communication within the classroom." A librarian concluded that with "EdNet, both teachers and students can see the value of online communication as a practical learning tool."

In a chemistry class where only one section attended the training, the students then worked with the other section that did not get the original training. A teacher from another school wrote, "Working with and through the Rock Valley College staff and educational network was a wonderful learning experience for myself and the students. We learned a great deal about information literacy - locating information online quickly, assessing the information, documenting

our sources, and using the information we located appropriately." Another teacher saw as a strength of the project that "it was a hands-on learning process. The students were immediately able to utilize the information they had learned and practice the process of searching for information." Teachers reported that "more students used Internet sources than would have by a significant number." A new school librarian found that students "increased the number of electronic resources they used in the development of a social issue research paper."

Librarians at the schools reported that some of the students were coming in before or after school to use the online tools and many were accessing Rock Valley College online from their home computers. One teacher wrote, "The Rock Valley College staff created an open door not only for the grant participants to use their facilities at any time, but they also encouraged our high school students to avail themselves of their services and facilities."

Senior citizens

Several of the grants already described in this section did reach senior citizens with technology training. In addition, some LSTA training grants were specifically designed to enhance the technology skills of senior citizens.

Vespian Warner Public Library District hired a professional technology trainer to offer the first workshops and develop a "how-to" manual for library users. In 12 weeks, 57 people, averaging 60 years of age, participated. At least half came back several times, some coming once a week. About 300 of the new manuals have been used by library patrons. The library planned to continue the successful project with volunteers and the addition of a part-time staff person. The trainer reported that "with time and patience, at least half of these people learned how to surf the net, write a resume, set up a small bookkeeping system, write letters to their children, and even start a book." Many users commented on how impressed they were with the program and the instructor. "It was gratifying to see a pony-tailed young man patiently helping patrons in their 60s and 70s overcome their fear of and reluctance to using the computer."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

An intergenerational training program was designed by the Naperville Public Library in collaboration with the school and park districts. This project allowed for 317 seniors to attend five two-part classes (basic computers and Internet). The project coordinator felt that "a notable adjustment to the program was the addition of more orientation classes. Through ongoing assessments, it was learned that many who had registered for the project had no basic knowledge of computers and could not access the Internet even though in many cases it was available to them on a home computer." After the classes, seniors were invited to expand skills with high school-aged tutors in library. Tutors were available in the library's computer lab three afternoons a week and on Saturday mornings. In addition to the seniors who had attended the training sessions, the tutoring was used by another 184 senior citizens.

Seniors gave positive feedback to library staff regarding tutoring and library services. Some seniors scheduled instruction so as to have the same tutor. Intergenerational relationships began to form and solidify. "The intergenerational component of training provided an opportunity for young and senior residents of Naperville to learn from and teach each other, and both tutors and seniors became more comfortable with each other's learning and teaching styles."

Staff at the library were enthusiastic about the project, but concerned about the amount of people who participated. "Overall, the largest difficulty ... was its success. The logistics of training nearly twice the estimated amount of participants caused staff to scale back services in other areas. Local contribution of staff training time ... was much larger than anticipated." In addition to starting to use volunteers to continue the project, the library will work with students who are required to complete a community service hours requirement for graduation.

As part of an effort to improve library services to seniors, the Urbana Free Library offered a series of classes at two local retirement centers and provided computers for use at the two centers. During the grant year, three program series were used at the centers: basic computer usage (five sessions), using the library's online catalog (four sessions), and using article databases (two sessions). In addition, the library created a senior web page on the library's web site and user

guides. The first two series were completed by 35 seniors, and 19 completed the final series. The library is continuing the training series. "We already have another waiting list of over 40 patrons who have heard about the program and want to take the classes this fall."

The library now hosts library orientation programs at the retirement centers "in which we give residents a Power Point visual tour of the library and issue library cards. We also started weekly delivery of library books for the residents." The librarians report that "the senior patrons who were involved in this grant have given us very positive feedback and are much more frequent and confident library users." Remote access was an important part of the training for seniors who found it difficult to get to the library. "After learning to search and place holds remotely, it was a logical extension to provide weekly delivery service to the retirement centers. This is already a very popular service, and probably the reason for the continuing requests for new library cards."

The DeKalb school district saw a clear need for technology training for senior citizens. In a review of community resources, no technology classes specifically designed for seniors were identified. A survey conducted among seniors prior to the start of the project indicated that senior citizens wanted to learn computer skills but in most cases could not attend classes at a nearby college outside of DeKalb. The distance and cost of the classes prohibited them from taking advantage of these classes.

The DeKalb Senior Services Center and the Golden Years Plaza agreed to acquire computers to have available on-site for the training. Using a coalition with the high school, the senior center, a local college, and community organizations, volunteers were then trained and used to teach seniors. The project director had hoped for 50 volunteers, but actually trained over 70 volunteers, mostly high school students.

Four sites were used for the technology training: the high school, the public library, the senior center, and the Golden Years Plaza. The training using a coaching approach, with only one or two seniors meeting with a volunteer trainer at a time. Initially participants signed up for four sessions; 65 seniors attended at least four classes. Many senior citizens attended additional

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

sessions if they wanted more practice. The total number of sessions were impressive. The high school hosted 80 sessions, the public library 44 sessions, the senior center 24, and Golden Years Plaza 48. The project continues to offer classes with several of the partners.

As described in the final report, "the senior citizens had the opportunity to try their hand at using a computer if they had never used one, to increase their skills if they had, and more importantly, to realize how many people in our community were willing to volunteer their time to help them learn." Phone interviews were conducted with most of the seniors that took the classes. "All the senior citizens were so appreciative for the experience." Many of the seniors citizens that took classes live in low-income housing. "They would never have had the resources to pay for computer classes," according to the project director. "They were thrilled when they discovered that they could send greeting cards at no cost to their family and friends through the Internet." One woman was helped by her volunteer trainer to find the city in Germany where she was born. "Tears came to her eyes when she saw the familiar sites of her homeland."

The story of one woman's participation makes a powerful statement about the impact of this project and others like it. Doris attended a total of eight training sessions.

> When Doris signed up for the training at the senior center, she learned that her great-grandson had designed the logo for the project. She keeps a copy of the logo in her purse and shows it to everyone she meets. Doris was especially interested in learning to use email. For Mother's Day, her children bought her a device called "My email." Her children reported that Doris would not let any of the family touch the gift. She said, "No, leave it alone. I'm going to take it to the high school so Danny [her tutor] can set it up for me. He's so patient and smart, I know he can do it!" After two sessions, Doris was using her email to communicate with family who lived in another state. Recently, Doris was diagnosed with terminal cancer. She said she wanted to enjoy the rest of her life, so here she is, driving to the high school, learning computer skills. She comes to school dressed impeccably and always makes Danny feel like he is the best teacher in the world. Danny said he enjoyed teaching her because it was like helping his grandparents whom he had taught using the Internet.

The most positive comments came from the senior citizens that worked with high school students. The students were described as "capable, compassionate, and committed to the project," and "they made the senior citizens feel so at ease when they worked with them." The high school

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

principal was stopped in the hallway by a couple who had been taking classes. They made a point to tell him how impressed they were with "their little girl" who was helping them learn about the computer. "The senior citizens that came to the high school learned more than computer skills; they saw first hand what great kids we have at our school," according to the school librarian. "Having the senior citizens come to the high school for these classes was the highlight of the year. After a while, ... it was natural to have the senior citizens in the building."

The involvement of young adults as volunteers was an important feature of this project. The senior citizens were proud to get their certificates of completion, and the students were proud to give it to them. One senior reported that "Tim shook my hand and said, 'You're now a graduate of the Senior Surfer program'." The high school librarian reported that "the Dekalb High School computer club plans to make this project one of their activities next year. Many students commented that they would like to sign up again next year. Some of our students are continuing to volunteer at other sites this summer."

EDUCATE AND AUTOMATE GRANTS

Illinois has offered its own grant program to support technology in libraries during the past five years. Educate and Automate, a state-funded initiative, is a key contributor to the progress being made toward meeting LSTA goals and in further development of libraries statewide. This section briefly outlines the Educate and Automate grant program to illustrate why the Illinois State Library may have used a smaller percentage of LSTA funds for technology than other states. These state-funded grants complement the technological development supported by LSTA, allow for more special application technology projects in LSTA grants, and demonstrate the state's philosophy of using LSTA funds as a catalyst for ongoing state funding for libraries.

Basic equipment, digitization projects, adaptive technology, and networking solutions are the primary categories of funding in Educate and Automate. The grant offerings for each of the five fiscal years are summarized below. These descriptions are offered as a comparison to the LSTA offerings during FY 1998 through FY 2002.

FY 1998 Educate and Automate Grant Offerings

Digitizing Illinois collections grants assisted in the digitizing of collections having historic value to the State of Illinois that were not currently available. Grants were available up to $100,000.

Workstations and printers grants purchased these two types of equipment. Priority was given to libraries that could show that replacement would significantly improve access to needed information. These grant funds supported 50 percent of the total workstation and printer costs. Grants were available at a minimum of $1,000 up to a maximum of $40,000.

Telecom/networking solutions grants purchased and installed local area networks, wide area networks, and other Internet access solutions. Preference was given to

shared solutions involving multiple library agencies; funds could not be used to purchase workstations. No grant maximum was established.

Fast start grants provided specified equipment not currently owned by the applicant library. The eligible equipment included: answering machine, voice phone, voice phone line installation, plain paper fax machine, fax phone line installation, a 33.6 or faster modem, TDD, and/or a color ink jet printer. Grants were available up to a maximum of $2,500 for multiple pieces of equipment.

FY 1999 Educate and Automate Grant Offerings

Digital imaging projects allowed libraries, alone or in collaboration with other institutions, to develop and implement a plan for digitizing library materials having historic value to the State of Illinois that were not currently available. Applicants had to have a publicly accessible web site or have begun development of a site. Completed projects had to be Internet accessible and could not require user fees. Funds were used either for purchasing appropriate and compatible equipment required for the project or outsourcing the project to an appropriate source. Grants were available up to a maximum of $100,000.

Fast start program allowed libraries to acquire assistive technology selected from a set list. Among the types of technology eligible were magnification aids, closed circuit television, computer screen magnification and enhancement, screen reading software, screen synthesizers, refreshable Braille displays, speech recognition software, Braille translator software, software and equipment for users with physical disabilities, scanners, telephone access for the hearing impaired, and/or assistive listening devices. The library had to consult with local disability groups and/or patrons with disabilities. Grants were available up to a maximum of $2,500 for multiple pieces of equipment.

Public Internet access workstation and printer awards allowed libraries to purchase a single workstation and a printer that would provide public Internet access for libraries currently not offering that service to their users. Public was defined as the library's primary users. Grants were available up to a maximum of $3,000.

New local area networks awards assisted local libraries that did not have a functional local area network (LAN) with the purchase and installation of a LAN. Applications could include up to five workstations and two printers. Preference was given to applications that were part of a plan to offer patron Internet access or to join a shared circulation system offered by the regional library system. The grant would provide libraries with up to 75 percent of the cost. Grants were available up to a maximum of $15,000.

Expansion or enhancement of existing networks awards assisted libraries with projects to enhance local and wide area networks. Preference was given to libraries that were part of a plan to join or expand participation in a shared circulation system operated by the regional library system or part of a plan to improve patron

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Internet access. Applications could not include workstations or printers. The grant would provide libraries with up to 50 percent of the project costs. Grants were available up to a maximum of $30,000 for single institutions and up to $10,000 per participating institution for consortia.

FY 2000 Educate and Automate Grant Offerings

Fast start - basic equipment grants provided specified equipment not currently owned by the applicant library. The eligible equipment included: answering machine, voice phone, plain paper fax machine, dedicated fax phone line installation, a 33.6 or faster modem, typewriter, scanner, mass storage/Zip drive, and/or a color ink jet printer. Grants were available up to a maximum of $2,000 for multiple pieces of equipment, with set limits on the cost of each kind of equipment.

Fast start - assistive technology awards allowed libraries to acquire assistive technology selected from a set list. Among the types of technology eligible were magnification aids, closed circuit television, computer screen magnification and enhancement, screen reading software, screen synthesizers, refreshable Braille displays, speech recognition software, Braille translator software, software and equipment for users with physical disabilities, scanners, telephone access for the hearing impaired, and/or assistive listening devices. The library had to consult with local disability groups and/or patrons with disabilities. Grants were available up to a maximum of $2,500 for multiple pieces of equipment.

Public Internet access awards allowed libraries to purchase a single workstation and a printer that would provide public Internet access for libraries currently not offering that service to their users. Public was defined as the library's primary users. Grants were available up to a maximum of $2,000.

New local area networks awards assisted local libraries that did not have a functional local area network (LAN) with the purchase and installation of a LAN. Applications could include up to five workstations and two printers. Preference was given to applications that were part of a plan to offer patron Internet access or to join a shared circulation system offered by the regional library system. The grant would provide libraries with up to 75 percent of the cost. Grants were available up to a maximum of $15,000.

Expansion or enhancement of existing networks awards assisted libraries with projects to enhance local and wide area networks. Preference was given to libraries that were part of a plan to join or expand participation in a shared circulation system operated by the regional library system or part of a plan to improve patron Internet access. Applications could not include workstations or printers. The grant would provide libraries with up to 50 percent of the project costs. Grants were available up to a maximum of $30,000 for single institutions and up to $10,000 per participating institution for consortia.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FY 2001 Educate and Automate Grant Offerings

Innovations in library technology grants allowed libraries to create new programs using cutting edge technology. Technology could be utilized to further broaden patron access to information, to increase patron understanding and use of technology, and to explore new options for delivering exemplary library service. The projects were to be viewed as models for other libraries to replicate. Projects required an advisory committee, and the funding was not intended to expand current technologies, including those items offered in FY 2000 and FY 2001 Educate and Automate programs. At least 90 percent of the grant funds were to be used to purchase equipment. The maximum amount for each grant is $30,000.

Fast start - assistive technology grants allowed libraries to acquire assistive technology selected in consultation with local disability groups and/or patrons with disabilities and experts within the state. Grants were available up to a maximum of $2,500 for multiple pieces of equipment.

New local area networks awards assisted local libraries that did not have a functional local area network (LAN) with the purchase and installation of a LAN. Applications could include up to five workstations and two printers. Preference was given to applications that were part of a plan to offer patron Internet access or to join a shared circulation system offered by the regional library system. The grant would provide libraries with up to 75 percent of the cost. Grants were available up to a maximum of $15,000.

Expansion or enhancement of existing networks awards assisted libraries with projects to enhance local and wide area networks. Preference was given to libraries that were part of a plan to join or expand participation in a shared circulation system operated by the regional library system or part of a plan to improve patron Internet access. Applications could not include workstations or printers. The grant would provide libraries with up to 50 percent of the project costs. Grants were available up to a maximum of $30,000 for single institutions and up to $10,000 per participating institution for consortia.

An additional offering was developed to specifically fund microfilm readers and printers during FY 2001. These grants were available up to a maximum of $4,500.

FY 2002 Educate and Automate Grant Offerings

Back to basics grants are being used to purchase one or more pieces of the following equipment: answering machine, whiteboard, copy machine, computer (can include peripherals), fax machine, telephone, inkjet printer, and microform reader/printer. If the library already owns the above equipment, the funds could be used to purchase a replacement, enhancement, or upgrade. Grants were available at a minimum of $100 to a maximum of $1,000.

Digital imaging of Illinois history and cultural heritage material grants are allowing libraries to create electronic versions of its materials and collections for posting on the Internet for use by a wider audience. Priorities were given to projects that digitize primary source material, such as archives, manuscripts, diaries and journals, photographs, electronic media, and sound recordings. All items digitized need to be accessible through the Illinois Digital Archives, and the grant recipient had to attend training at the Illinois Digitization Institute in Urbana. Grants were available in amounts ranging from $5,000 to $10,000.

Development of existing local and wide area networks grants are assisting libraries that are expanding or broadening their existing networks. These grants are supporting development of Local Area Networks (LANs) and Wide Area Networks (WANs) which will facilitate compatibility with the Local Library System Automation Project. These grants are providing libraries with up to 50 percent of the project costs. Grants were available up to a maximum of $30,000.

Wireless local area networks grants are providing funds for local area networks that do not require wiring, but rather transmits and receives data through the air. Among the uses of the wireless technology are: in buildings that do not lend themselves to wiring, in libraries where they cannot afford to do wiring, in classrooms/media labs where the number of computers may vary, and for use of computers in an off-site location. These grants are providing libraries with up to 50 percent of the project costs. Grants were available up to a maximum of $30,000.

Distribution of Educate and Automate grants

The scope of the Educate and Automate program is impressive during the same five-year period as LSTA. In total, 2,794 grants were awarded at a cost of $11,001,632. A comparison with LSTA competitive grants during the same period showed that for every two dollars awarded in LSTA, more than one dollar was awarded in Educate and Automate.

The greatest impact of the Educate and Automate funds comes in the area of networking. Grants were funded in this category each of the five years, with a total of $5,085,842 awarded. In total, 421 grants were funded for new local area networks, enhancement and expansion of existing wide area networks, and application of wireless technology for local area networks. All types of libraries received funding in this area.

In number of grants, those focusing on basic equipment were the most numerous. All types of libraries participated in these grant categories. The Fast Start initiatives for selected equipment were awarded for four of the five years. In total, 1,344 grants were given, adding up to $1,431,598. Workstations and printers were awarded in three of the five years. The 384 grants given out totaled $1,345,097. Assistive technology grants totaled $1,304,475 over three funding years, with 574 grants awarded.

The remaining two categories accounted for 71 grants equaling $1,834,620. Digitization projects accounted for 56 of the grants awarded across three years of funding. These grants were awarded to all types of libraries. Spending in this category totaled $1,475,189. The 15 innovation grants, awarded only in FY 2001, totaled $359,431. In spite of the small number of grants awarded in this area, all types of libraries were represented.

Comparison of Educate and Automate and LSTA awards

Libraries in Illinois make use of both LSTA and Educate and Automate grants to improve library services. For FY 1998, 6.4 percent of the Educate and Automate grants went to libraries that also received LSTA during the same fiscal year. The highest number of Educate and Automate Grants -- 834 -- were awarded in this fiscal year. In total, 24 libraries received awards from both grant programs in FY 1998.

For FY 1999, a higher percentage was found in the analysis. Nearly half (46.7%) of the Educate and Automate grants went to libraries that also received LSTA during the same fiscal year. In total, 99 libraries received awards from both grant programs.

The highest percentage of crossovers came in FY 2000. During this period, 58.2 percent of the Educate and Automate grants went to libraries that also received LSTA grants in FY 2000. The largest number of libraries using grants from both programs is in FY 2000 as well - a total of 160 libraries.

The picture was similar in FY 2001, with 54.5 percent of the Educate and Automate grants going to libraries that also received LSTA funds in the same year. This represented 140 libraries receiving grants from both funding sources.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The final year of comparison, FY 2002, showed that 25.4 percent of the Educate and Automate grants went to libraries that also received LSTA grants in the same year. In total, 102 libraries are using grants from both grant programs this year.

The reach of the Educate and Automate program is statewide and to all types of libraries. These funds support the mission of LSTA and, as such, help Illinois libraries make progress on the goals in the Illinois five-year LSTA plan. The two programs complement each other, helping to assure that the Illinois library community can offer a full range of technology-based and technology-enhanced library services.

LIGHTING THE FIRE

The Illinois State Library began a new LSTA grant initiative in the summer of 2000 called *Lighting the Fire*. The purpose of the new program was to enhance the creativity of grants developed from the field and to explore ways to improve the grant-making process in Illinois. The overall goal was to "ignite" the flame of creativity in the library community as well as take a deeper look at alternative approaches for encouraging participation in seeking grant funding. The project also serves as an important element in the evaluation of LSTA and the development of a new LSTA five-year plan. The initiative also strengthened the role of regional library systems as supporters of local grant seeking activities.

Lighting the Fire incorporated two training and information sharing meetings for teams from each of the regional systems. The first event was held in February 2001 and the second in November 2001. Each system received a $60,000 LSTA grant to support a system-level *Lighting* event (or multiple events) and fund grants to member libraries. It was expected that at least $50,000 would be awarded in grants to member libraries in each system.

The *Lighting* project was kicked off with a two-day retreat held in at Pere Marquette State Park, February 1-2, 2001. Each regional library system was invited to send two staff people and up to six people from member libraries. The charge was to send people who are "the best of the best,"

the type who would "walk through fire for their ideas," and people who could "translate that energy to other members of the library system." Participation in the retreat included staff from all types of libraries. The retreat offered information and experiences in creativity and change. Participants were involved in several hands-on creative activities, and each team had time to think about how the *Lighting* project would develop within their own systems.

Following the retreat, each regional system designed a training event (or multiple events) to carry the flame of creativity to its member libraries. The presenters and facilitators for the system events included the trainer from the Pere Marquette retreat (Joan Levy), Karen Thornburg (who was the trainer selected for the November retreat), a team from Chicago Library System, and members from the *Lighting* teams. The lengths of the events varied, with the majority being full-day offerings. In comparison to the approach used at the Pere Marquette retreat, all the system-level workshops had a stronger library component, showing how the creativity principles applied in library settings, and a more specific focus on preparing quality grants. Inspirational and fun activities were instrumental to the workshops. The written responses to the workshops and notes from the system teams showed an overall a favorable response to these events. Several of the systems reported unsolicited notes of appreciation following the activities.

Some systems hosted follow-up events to further explore grant writing and to brainstorm and build linkages for *Lighting* grant projects. In some systems, *Lighting* grantees met together, and several systems highlighted the *Lighting* grant projects through web sites, promotional activities, and showcases at system meetings.

Each system team also developed criteria and a process for awarding the *Lighting* grants. All grants were for short-term projects that had to be completed by November 30, 2001. Most systems required participation in the system's *Lighting the Fire* training event for a library to be eligible for the funding. Some systems created categories of funding based on grant amounts. The Lewis and Clark Library System used its own funding to offer grants to their *Lighting* team members (referred to as the Master Gardeners following the system's botanical training theme).

Most systems used written applications. One system accepted applications in any format (although a cover sheet and abstract were required), another offered the option of presenting the grant to the reviewers as a supplement to the written proposal, and a third required a presentation in addition to the written grant. One system had a requirement of no paper proposals.

The predominant pattern for reviewing grants was to score them using a set of criteria. In addition to points awarded for traditional grant components (needs, planning, implementation, evaluation, and resources), it was likely to see points assigned for creativity and innovation. Across the systems, the highest number of points possible in this category was 65 out of 100 points on Heritage Trail grants. Collaboration was seen as a key factor in creativity. Points assigned to this also varied, with the highest number possible at DuPage Library System with up to 50 points for partnerships. A few rewarded new grant writers or partnering with a new grant writer, and one system placed a strong emphasis on communication of the grant outcomes, giving up to 25 points for this element in the proposal.

Three systems used a more narrative approach to reviewing the grants, using the criteria as general guidelines rather than assigning specific point values for each criterion. Four systems exchanged grants for reviewing, and one system used people outside the system and member libraries as a review team.

A second retreat was held in Springfield on November 5 and 6, 2001. This event, called Fanning the Flames, allowed each system to showcase and celebrate the *Lighting* events and grants that had resulted from the initiative. In addition, focus group discussions were held to evaluate the initiative and its implications for the LSTA grant process. The retreat continued the

learning among team members with more information and exercises related to individual creativity and the change process.

The results of Lighting the Fire

The energy and creativity of the system teams were definitely sparked at the Pere Marquette retreat, as within less than a month the first system events occurred to spread the fire

of creativity among libraries in Illinois. All training events were completed by June 2001. The reach of these system-level activities during a short time period is significant. Almost 800 people learned and thought about creativity and grants throughout the state and across types of libraries.

The criteria and local grant processes developed within each system provide the Illinois State Library with an array of approaches that could be used in future LSTA grantmaking. Three key elements stand out from the criteria used for review of the *Lighting* grants: creativity, partnerships, and new participants in a grant process. It is interesting, however, that the main elements of presentation of the grant idea were consistent across the systems, validating a core set of data elements needed for determining the funding of a grant.

The rubric approach to scoring grants developed by DuPage Library System suggests a scoring strategy that might result in higher inter-rater reliability if used with LSTA grants. The Northern Illinois Library System's (NILS) approach of having its members develop and define a set of criteria provides a model of involvement that is being emulated by the use of the *Lighting* ambassadors to advise LSTA grantmaking. The UNICA criteria used by NILS had five dimensions: users, need, impact, creativity, and assessment.

In total, 316 *Lighting* grants were submitted, with 167 grants being funded (52.8%). The majority of the grants went to public libraries, with more than 20 percent being awarded to school libraries. Academic and special libraries represented the remaining percentage of grants, with special libraries receiving the smallest number of grants. The systems varied on the number of grants awarded, with one system giving only four grants. The largest number of grants given by a system was 34. An indication of the level of support by the systems for *Lighting* is the additional resources provided by some systems to fund grants. Some systems provided additional funds for the training event and added to the amount of money given out in *Lighting* grants.

Creativity was defined as new to the individual library or service community. The diversity of the funded grants show how broadly that creativity was defined. The largest number of grants specifically targeted adults (nearly one-third), while 44 grants focused on services to young adults

(26.3%). Services for children were central to 24 of the grants (14.4%). Topical programs and reading-related activities were common, and training for librarians and teachers made up nearly ten percent of the grants (16 grants). Marketing and promotion of library services was another theme that emerged in the grants, with 26 grants in this category (15.6%). Outreach activities were featured in 12 of the grants, and history was a popular topic, being represented in 28 grants (16.8%). There was a technology presence in the *Lighting* grants, but this was strongly integrated into the service aspects of the grants. Among the technology activities funded were development of web sites for promotion, information technology, training, and digitization of local materials.

Since the definition of creativity tended to be "in the eye of the beholder" (or reviewer) and based on local experiences, it is difficult to give an objective analysis of the degree to which creative grants resulted. All the system reviewers felt the grants that were funded represented creative ideas and approaches. Only one out of two grants submitted were funded, suggesting varying degrees of creativity and quality. When examining the types of grants funded during the five-year period of LSTA, the image is one of more diversified ideas and approaches in the *Lighting* grants. Further, the overall presentation approaches for the ideas were more creative as indicated by the various project titles and descriptions. Although intangible, reviewing the descriptions of all the *Lighting* grants is energizing. At the second retreat, abstracts of all the projects were given to participants. This document was actively being read and discussed by participants from all the system teams.

The diversity of grants can be illustrated with a few examples. Services such as SAIL (senior alliance in libraries), Making Moolah Magnates (young adult investment program series), and Building Blocks to Reading (a web site for parents of children aged one to five) show libraries customizing activities to meet specific client needs. Rocking thru Time (with a rocking chair as its symbol) focused on helping families explore and record their histories, while The Disappearing Farm project involved kids collecting photographs to document rural life in Illinois. Reading promotions such as Got Book? were supported with programs such as a science and math literacy project that

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

involved designing a liveable human community on Mars for the year 2030 and literary instructional videos for and by young adults in all genres.

Libraries reached out to groups with special needs, such as the Books for Babies project at an alternative high school for teen mothers and Pictures and Prose, a photography and publishing project for adult literacy students. Marketing the library brought out creative ideas, such as a shared set of costumes for use at library media events and programming, a CD ROM game that was an interactive presentation on the library, a Walking Talking Book mascot, and Extra! Extra! Extra!, a community newsletter coordinated by the library and mailed to all households.

Programming for current and potential users also was present in the *Lighting* grants, such as an Art of the Book festival featuring history, papermaking, and a rare book road show. They're Growing Like Weeds offered two classes - one for babysitting and one for being in charge parents are not at home - and Odyssey of the Arts featured a progressive dinner at library branches. Library staff and teachers also were the focus of learning activities, such as the Ticket to Ride project for a daylong bus trip to area libraries, XL Man for training on Excel for librarians, collaborative planning stipends for teachers to engage in collaborative planning of library projects, and conservation/disaster workshops for librarians.

One of the goals of this initiative was to increase participation in the grant seeking process. The system-level *Lighting* grants clearly brought new grantees into the grant process. One out of four *Lighting* grants went to libraries that had not received an LSTA grant during the four-year period prior to *Lighting* (45 grants, 26.9%). Since the comparison analysis looked for matches on the library name, it is likely that the *Lighting* project actually brought in a greater percentage of individuals new to the LSTA grant process. For some libraries, *Lighting* also served as a catalyst for renewed grant seeking, since several of the libraries had not applied for an LSTA grant in the previous two fiscal years.

The *Lighting* workshops and grant process preceded the FY 2002 LSTA grant offerings. As discussed earlier in this report, the *Lighting* initiative influenced the definition of the general grant

offering (Do you have a dream?). The grants funded in this category do reflect a stronger presence of libraries other than public and show a wider diversity of ideas than seen in previous LSTA offerings. It is significant that one out of three of the funded dream grants (20 of 57 grants, 35.1%) had received *Lighting* grants. Two of these libraries had never received an LSTA grant before FY 2002. The *grow with a pro* offering showed a similar result. Over one-quarter of the 208 funded libraries in this category had received grants in the *Lighting* initiative (60 grants, 28.8%). Of these, five of the libraries had never received LSTA funds before FY 2002.

Implications for LSTA in Illinois

Fundamentally, the *Lighting the Fire* initiative illustrated what can happen when an idea from one person is supported and shared. The concept for *Lighting* started with Patricia Norris, director of library development, and was shared and supported by a planning group. This group spread the idea to systems and other members of the library community through the first retreat. The flames were fanned with multiple system events and activities, reaching nearly 800 people with direct training and more with other system dissemination efforts. In turn, the *Lighting* projects improved library service to users, reaching thousands with the grant-funded activities. One library reported that the story kits developed with a *Lighting* grant were so popular with the children that they initiated a campaign to collect pennies to produce more of the kits; several hundred dollars were raised. The geometric progression of the *Lighting* concept from one person to a statewide library community in a one-year period is one of the most compelling aspects of *Lighting the Fire*. The use of a follow-up retreat to solidify learning and offer new ideas and opportunities for commitment to a creative grant process helped to assure that the idea would continue to flourish.

At the November *Lighting* retreat, each system team was asked to select one member to serve as an "ambassador" to continue the work of the *Lighting the Fire* initiative. The ambassadors now serve as a working committee for LSTA in Illinois, providing feedback on the LSTA funding categories, review criteria, and the grantmaking process. Further, these ambassadors are the liaisons between the state library and systems for the continuing *Lighting* activities at the system level.

Each system team also created a set of ideas and priorities for carrying on the *Lighting* initiative. Across systems, the primary types of activities planned were brainstorming grant ideas for new LSTA grants and other funding sources, networking among libraries for improved library services, grant writing assistance and workshops, and celebration of the successes of local libraries. Overall, the *Lighting* project engaged the system in a more personal and interactive style for working with member libraries as they seek grant funding.

Focus groups conducted at the November retreat provided valuable input into future LSTA activity. Eight focus groups were conducted; the groups were organized by type of library and followed the same interview guide. The results of the interviews reveal an increased understanding of the challenges of awarding LSTA grants statewide. While creative presentation formats were used by some of the systems, carrying this out for the large number of LSTA applicants in Illinois was recognized as difficult for the Illinois State Library. It was interesting, however, that a few of the LSTA written grant applications for FY 2002 were delivered in

creative ways to the state library. The *Lighting* process did validate the core elements of funding requests needed to make grant awards, similar to those currently being used for LSTA.

Focus group results and the system practices during *Lighting* provided helpful information on review criteria. The variety of criteria and particularly the weighting of some criteria suggests areas of change in the review point system currently being used for Illinois LSTA grants. Three areas to add or strengthen in the criteria (and review points) were creativity, partnerships, and encouragement of novice grant writers. The partnership element has had a clear presence in the five years of LSTA in Illinois, with specific points awarded for this component in the first four years of LSTA. Rewarding the creative idea was important to participants in the focus groups, and there was some sense that additional weight given to a creativity criterion could provide a balance to the quality of the writing of the grant itself. Encouraging participation in LSTA was an outcome of *Lighting*, and system team members saw encouragement of applications by novice grant writers as important.

Other suggestions were made for modification of the LSTA grant process from the focus groups. Among these was the development a grant mentor program in concert with regional library systems. One approach to mentoring was to create a specific mentor/mentee grant category or add points as part of the review process for those who worked with a mentor. In a similar vein, a novice or apprentice grant category could be implemented. Bringing people together before, during, and after a LSTA grant cycle was seen as valuable for developing grant ideas, building better personal networks, and sharing results and learning from the funded LSTA projects. In particular, people were interested in hearing what did and did *not* work, so libraries

did not repeat mistakes or reinvent the wheel. Many focus group participants reiterated the value of building partnerships with other library and community groups.

The use of LSTA mini-grants was reinforced with the *Lighting* project. Smaller grants appealed to libraries less familiar with the grant process or libraries with more limited personnel resources. As one focus group participant noted, "small libraries feel more comfortable asking for small amounts of money." Another felt that "people see LSTA as too untouchable." The *Lighting* grant process indicated the continued need for larger grants as well. Especially among the academic librarians, a barrier to participation in the *Lighting* offerings was that the amounts available were considered too small given the bureaucracy required to administer small grant amounts in larger libraries.

The field-initiated *Lighting* grants offer additional insight into possible priorities in the future LSTA long-range plan. The *Lighting* ambassadors will provide valuable input into the new LSTA plan and work with systems to involve the library community in determining funding priorities and local service needs. One of the most positive outcomes of the *Lighting* initiative is the level of engagement of the local and system library communities in LSTA and the grant-making process. This renewed attention and interest on the part of the field will have a positive effect on the development of the new LSTA long-range plan and potential revisions to the LSTA grant-making process.

CONCLUSION

The basic question guiding this evaluation was, "Did Illinois make progress toward the goals in the LSTA long-range plan?" The answer to this question is yes. The state library solicited and awarded grants that support the goals in the plan. The library community provided input into the interpretation of the goals with field-initiated grant projects. This was balanced with defined grant categories designed to achieve progress in each of the five goal areas. State-funded programs, especially Educate and Automate, helped the library community make a difference in the areas prescribed in the LSTA long-range plan.

Throughout the years of LSTA funding, the state continues to be responsive to statewide needs, as indicated by changing program offerings and use of state funds for additional library projects. The Illinois library community represents a full spectrum of libraries, including those that are under funded or having special needs. The LSTA funds have been used to enhance the quality of library services in strong libraries that can provide models for other libraries as well as improve the basic services and collections in libraries with limited financial resources. Small grant offerings were effective for drawing a large number of libraries into the LSTA grant process. The LSTA process also allows for participation by even the largest libraries by making the upper limits of the grant awards large enough to make a difference in a larger library. The Illinois State Library has done an effective job in balancing the needs of an extremely diverse library community in its LSTA offerings and awards.

The Illinois regional library systems have been multitype organizations for many years, setting the stage for a multitype LSTA program. This evaluation clearly documents the extent to which the Illinois State Library has worked to be inclusive of all types of libraries. Each year, LSTA dollars go to support library services for users in all library settings, and multiple LSTA projects are collaborations among different types of libraries. Further, products and services

developed under LSTA are accessible throughout the multitype library community. The organization of the *Lighting the Fire* initiative illustrates the focused attention given to assuring that all the voices in the library community are heard in LSTA.

Another characteristic of LSTA grants in Illinois is collaboration. The review of all the major grants revealed partnerships as one of the strongest elements in the projects across LSTA categories. In one way, this feature may be simply a reflection of the cooperative library system structure in Illinois. On the other hand, the collaborative activities in the grants go beyond library cooperation to include a diverse set of organizations and agencies. The Illinois State Library promoted the collaboration concept with specific criteria for partnerships in their LSTA guidelines for funding. Added weight was given to this element in the point system used to evaluate grant applications. Clearly, this focus on collaborations broadens the impact of LSTA to a larger group of libraries and extends the benefits to other community agencies and organizations.

There is active sharing of products and information from LSTA grants throughout the state and nationally. With the focus on creating databases and web sites, all libraries in the state can make use of the new information and services developed with LSTA funds. In some cases, individual products, such as CD ROMs or publications, are distributed directly to systems and individual libraries; all are available through ILLINET for interlibrary loan. The state library does maintain a web site that includes "Grants you wish you'd thought of . . ." to encourage sharing from LSTA grants. LSTA projects also are featured in issues of the *Illinois Libraries* journal. Regional and national presentations of LSTA-funded projects also were detailed in final reports on grant projects.

It is important to acknowledge the quality of the administration of LSTA in Illinois by the state library. As explained earlier in this report, the number of competitive LSTA grants awarded in Illinois is larger than the total of many other states combined. The database developed for LSTA allows for multiple ways of analyzing and tracking the grants and is kept current. State library consulting staff assumes major responsibility for not only reviewing and monitoring grants, but as key informants for libraries engaged in the grant-seeking process. Efforts to promote the

103

grant offerings and to conduct training on grant writing are year-round activities. Continuous refinement of the grant reporting instructions result in creating a good record of LSTA in Illinois. In total, the management of LSTA funding in Illinois is impressive and effective. This level of effort is accomplished primarily by staff that is funded by state funds rather than LSTA dollars.

LSTA is complemented in Illinois with strong state-level funding for libraries. This is manifested in per capita funding formulas for school and public libraries, public library construction equalization grants, and ongoing support for ILLINET and other statewide electronic services and resources. The Educate and Automate program extends the impact of LSTA by offering grants in networking, equipment, and digital imaging technology. In a recent study reported in *American Libraries* (March 2002), the effect of external funding for technology on public libraries has been a major one. The authors conclude that the combination of funding has "enabled libraries to engage in significant experimentation and innovation in the services they provide." This public library process of using multiple funding sources for technology is modeled in Illinois for all types of libraries due to the state's effective multitype approach to LSTA and dedication of additional state resources open to libraries of all type.

LSTA funding, along with its predecessor LSCA, has been a catalyst for additional state funding for libraries. Construction, adult and family literacy, public library equalization, and Project Next Generation grants trace their roots to federal funding. The Illinois State Library support for adult and family literacy and the newer Project Next Generation have given libraries strong visibility in the state and support the concept that libraries do make a difference in people's lives.

The *Lighting the Fire* initiative shows the Illinois State Library's strong commitment to continuous improvement in its grant process, the quality of grant projects, and inclusiveness of eligible libraries. As described earlier in this report, the *Lighting* project affected every area of the state and all types of libraries. The grants funded in the LSTA FY 2002 "dream category" were more diverse than in other general grant categories from the previous years in terms of projects funded and spread of grant projects by type of library. The results from *Lighting the*

Fire are influencing the future LSTA offerings, the grant process, and the development of the new LSTA long-range plan. This effort also was a catalyst for system-level activities to improve the quality of grants, to more fully involve libraries in grant seeking from multiple sources, and to provide additional opportunities for creative partnerships and grant development among the member libraries.

Recommendations

It is important for the Illinois State Library to basically continue the good work it is doing with LSTA funds in Illinois. As described in this report, the approaches used by the state library have been effective in making progress toward the goals in the LSTA five-year plan as well as meeting needs of a diverse library community. Further, the continuation of the impact of the *Lighting the Fire* initiative through the committee of ambassadors and regional library systems will help keep the LSTA program relevant to the needs of the Illinois library community and be instrumental in the creation of a new five-year plan for LSTA.

In choosing future grant priorities, it is valuable to continue to invite field-initiated projects, especially using the current "Do you have a dream . . . " approach. These foster creative projects that can serve as models for other libraries and test new approaches to library service while ensuring that LSTA funding meets the needs of libraries in the state. Embedding specific ideas into the open category, such as those developed as separate programs in FY 2001 (i.e., Libraries in the 21st Century and Libraries as Community Leaders categories), would still allow for suggested emphases in funding. This open grants category is then complemented with categories that target specific clientele or indicate a service or collection priority (such as the marketing and collection connection categories). Maintaining the use of mini-grants also is recommended for meeting specific needs in the state, including those of underfunded and small libraries.

Building on the strength of the current approach to LSTA in Illinois, the following recommendations are offered. The order does not imply a priority ranking.

- The LSTA grant reports reveal a range of quantitative and qualitative evidence of outcomes from the projects. The reporting system for all types of grants specifically

105

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

addresses project impact. Since evaluation of LSTA projects rests with the grantee, however, documentation of impact remains an area for continued improvement in the quality of grant reporting. Continuous training in outcomes-based evaluation is needed for all types of libraries. The Illinois State Library also can model quality evaluation by facilitating the sharing of effective grant evaluations and final reports.

- The Illinois LSTA database builds on the state library's systematic reporting process from grantees. To build the capacity of the database for evaluation of LSTA, a few additional reporting elements could be required to allow for better statistical analysis across projects. Examples of this would be hours of training and program attendance. Additional index terms for all grants would help in grouping similar projects. Finally, a more consistent use of subject labels in the database is needed. The variance in terms for grants such as *grow with the pro* and *bring in an expert* did not allow for simple comparisons and compilations across grant categories. A simple thesaurus of terms would streamline this process, perhaps leading to requiring the grantees to assign index terms as part of the reporting process.
- The emphasis in *Lighting the Fire* on creative grants suggests that an adjustment could be made in the evaluation point system used for reviewing LSTA grants. Recognizing and rewarding creativity along with other core elements, such as needs and implementation, potentially would encourage more creative grant projects. The practice of awarding points specifically for partnerships and collaboration had a positive influence on the presence of this element in LSTA grants in Illinois. This suggests that a similar approach might work with creativity. To continue the emphasis on partnerships, embedding criteria directly tied to collaboration in the grant guidelines is a practice that should be continued.
- Since LSTA grants are funded for one year, several of the grantees spend the majority of that year organizing activities, learning new skills, and developing products. The full delivery of the service or use of the product continues into the next year. A portion of funds could be set aside for modest planning grants that would lead to the possible

development of major grants in the following year. The planning grant year can be spent documenting more fully the need for services, solidifying and extending partnerships, identifying sources of expertise and equipment, brainstorming on alternative service approaches, creating a more complete implementation plan, and gathering baseline data to support a stronger evaluation component in the next grant proposal. Funding of a planning grant would not guarantee the award of a major grant in the following year, but it has the potential of improving the quality and eventual success of major grants. Planning grants would not be required for all major grants, but can be offered as an incentive to improve grant proposals or linked to a specific major grant category scheduled for the following fiscal year.

- The timing issue for completing grant activities also has a direct impact on documenting LSTA outcomes. Since some projects do not become fully operational or products are not completed until near the end of the grant year, these final grant reports offer limited impact information. It is recommended that the Illinois State Library use a sampling process to collect qualitative and quantitative evidence of impact from grants funded in previous years. In addition, this follow-up on major grants could provide a clearer picture of the continuation of services after grants have ended and address how well the projects have been integrated into the operations of the libraries. This current LSTA evaluation did not examine the continuation factor except as incidentally summarized in the final grant reports. Follow-up information in this area can assist the state library as it continues it ongoing evaluation of LSTA.

- In restructuring the LSTA long-range plan, consideration needs to be given for a broader goal in the area of training, which is currently encompassed in Goal Four. Goal Four focuses on training for staff and public in technology and information literacy. Clearly, with the *bring in an expert* and *grow with the pro* grants, not all training was linked directly to technology. Further, major training initiatives, such as the institutes for directors of small public libraries and school and public librarians and the *Lighting the Fire* project, focused on

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

content other than technology. LSTA support for training is a key impact area in the Illinois library community that builds capacity at local libraries for improved library services. The new long-range plan needs to more clearly reflect this priority.

- To encourage networking and to enhance the quality of grant projects, some consideration should be given to bringing together "like" grant projects early in a fiscal year to promote sharing of ideas and mentoring among staff working on similar projects. This creates a larger network among grantees across system lines and uses the dynamics of the group process to enrich the development of the individual projects. The groups can be brought together via videoconferencing. An alternative (or supplemental) approach would be for the library systems to bring all grantees from their regions together for brainstorming and mentoring on newly funded LSTA grants.

- As described earlier, a strong effort is made to share information and products from LSTA grants. As is typical of LSTA grants in most states, however, there is always room for further sharing of what worked in LSTA projects and avoiding reinventing the wheel on similar grant projects across fiscal years. The *Lighting the Fire* initiative demonstrated this principle, with most of the regional library systems showcasing funded projects at system events and on the system web sites. More use of the Illinois LSTA database to summarize project types and link similar projects would support this process.

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

NOTICE

Reproduction Basis

X	This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket)" form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.
	This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").